

Contents

News

SEAL Update	3
News Items	4
Amiga Update	7

Features

Interview with Petro	8
Get Netted!	10
Choosing An ISP	14
Hot Websites	38

Reviews

Miami	15
NetConnect 2	16
AmFTP	20
WebVision	21
IBrowse	22
Emailer Roundup	24
AWeb	26
StrICQ	27
TurboPrint 7	28
Epson Stylus Photo	30
BVision PPC	32

Support

Back to Basics	33
Internet Quake	35
Candy Factory Pro	36
Next Issue, Helpline etc.	39
Gallery	40



Have you got a short hint or tip you'd like to share with other

Clubbed readers? If you have don't be shy, send it in to use and you could have a lovely grey box all of your own!

Editorial

Firstly I have an apology to make, as I'm sure you've noticed this issue is very late, due to several other commitments (SEAL, WoA and work related) I've been unable to find the time I usually do to work on the magazine. However now it's here I hope you'll find this is our best issue yet. We have more pages (up from 36 to 40) and much better quality printing thanks to our new printers who print from PostScript files rather than the printed artwork we used to supply. Because the print is better quality we've been able to reduce the type size of the body text a little while retaining readability so all in all there's much more content in this issue than the first two.

One of the reasons this issue is late is because SEAL is heavily involved in organising this year's World of Amiga show which is taking place at the Kensington Town Hall Conference Centre, London on the 24th and 25th of July. I have been designing a brochure for the exhibitors and the show programme which will be given to all visitors. As you'll read in the news item this year's WoA is shaping up to be a really great event, with a combination of exciting announcements from Amiga, seminars, games, how-to sessions and loads of bargains can you afford to miss it?

The main focus of this issue is getting on the Internet, over the last few months several SEAL members have got connected and with the current state of the Amiga market and the fast moving events at Amiga and Internet connection is a great way of keeping up-to-date. In our main Get Netted feature we explain what the Internet is, what you need to get connected and the main services that are available when you get there. There's a page on ISPs complete with a step-by-step guide to get you connected to Freeserve. We also have reviews of many of the major Amiga Internet programs and a guide to some of the best sites on the Web.

For those of you already on the net and happy with their software we have reviews of the brilliant Turbo Print 7 and



the Epson Stylus Photo printer to go with it. Another perfect combination is the BVision PPC (reviewed on page 32) and Candy Factory Pro (review/tutorial on page 36) which takes full advantage of PPC and graphics cards.

In future issues of Clubbed we'd really like to expand our tutorial content, but unfortunately many people who are quite happy to write a review of a program don't feel they have the depth of knowledge required to write a good tutorial. So if you feel you could write a tutorial please get in touch and discuss it with me, it doesn't have to be a huge series stretching over several issues. In fact for a quarterly magazine a shorter self-contained tutorial on one aspect of a program is much better. We also want to hear from you if you have an idea tutorial (or any other type of feature) you'd like to see, write in and we'll see what we can come up with.

Finally I'd like to thank James McEwen who let us use his brilliant image (which you may remember from the Amiga Format gallery) for our cover this month, see the back page for another example of his outstanding work.

See you at WoA,

Robert.

The Chairman Speaks



Did you know that brainwashing is totally legal?... Let me tell you a story.

I have been into photography for some time now, and had decided it was time to enter into the world of digital photography, as the cameras are now more affordable and have better specifications than earlier models. Once I had researched into which drivers were available, I decided to purchase the Olympus Camedia C-1000L. On further investigation, I discovered that in this country only the Dixons Group sell this particular camera (oh oh!). So off I go to my nearest PC World (owned by Dixons), I spotted the item of my affections on the shelf, priced at £299. The following dialogue took place:

Assistant 1: Yes sir, how can I help?

Me: I would like to purchase the Camedia C-1000L.

Assistant 1: Good choice sir, blah, blah, blah... (handing me the camera to look at) which PC will you be using it with?

Me: An Amiga actually (this is going to be fun!)

Assistant 1: (With a look of horror on his face) You cannot connect it to an Amiga (reaching out to remove the camera from my grubby mitts).

Me: Yes I can, I have checked the software that I will need blah, blah, blah...

Assistant 1: (Reading from the box) It says here minimum spec IBM PC/AT with Windows or EVEN a Mac!

Me: Yes I know what it says on the box, I can read too! I know it will work on the Amiga as drivers are available off the Amiga or commercially (thinking to myself - what a wanker!).

Assistant 1: (Disgruntled) I will hand you over to my colleague.

Assistant 2: Yes mate.

Me: I want to buy the Camedia C-1000L to use on my Amiga.

Assistant 2: They (Amiga) still going are they? (He then showed me the features of the camera). If you are sure it works on the Amiga then fine, if you have any problems just bring it back.

Me: Okay thanks.

Assistant 2: I'm sure you have checked

it out yourself. I haven't got a computer myself, so I don't know which ones it will work on (Dixons well-trained staff, knowledgeable and as sharp as ever).

So I bought the camera and was chuffed with myself (I've been after one for a long time). I decided that after the weekend of using the camera (successfully), I would buy a nice case to keep it in and protect it. So I returned to PC World to see if they stocked this item (they don't), and when I walked into the store I came face to face with Assistant 1 again.

Assistant 1: (Assuming I had come to return the camera), I told you it wouldn't work on your Amiga!

Me: Yes it does, I've come here to buy a case (and showed him some photos I had printed).

Assistant 1: Wow the quality of these look really good just as good as any we've seen from the Pc's.

Assistant 1 had been brainwashed into thinking only Wintel existed in the computer world and thought he knew everything there was to know about computers (Wanker!). As for assistant 2, fortunately for me, had not been brainwashed YET.

There are lots of peripherals you can use on the Amiga despite what shop assistants advise. However, you have to make certain that you can use the particular product you are interested in. It is advisable to research which drivers are available for the type of hardware you want before you make your decision and check for their availability and costs. If you need advice about compatibility or help finding drivers then feel free to contact SEAL. (Address info here) The moral of this story is don't be dissuaded by the hype, make sure you have got your facts right and show them it is possible on the Amiga.

Mick



UPDATE

Members

Since the last magazine we've helped several more SEAL members get on the Internet and we hope this issue will encourage even more people to get connected. Members will find the latest members list complete with EMail addresses printed on the back of the covering letter accompanying their magazine.

We've had a bit of a committee shuffle with Mick Sutton officially taking on the treasurer role as Spencer currently has other commitments. Gary Storm becomes the secretary and Robert Williams takes on the technical support role. Two new committee members have also been appointed: Martin Miller and Jeff Martin.

WebPages

The new frames design of the SEAL web pages has been well received and

Continued...

Blurb

Clubbed is published quarterly by South Essex Amiga Link. For subscription details see the back page.

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WWW: http://seal.amiga.tm/

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(19:00 - 22:00 GMT only please).

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author of each piece, they do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, other contributors or SEAL.

Please Note: Clubbed is produced by SEAL members in their spare time, while we will always strive to produce the mag on time and include all the advertised contents this is not always possible if other commitments get in the way. The price you pay for Clubbed covers our costs and nothing more, we don't make a profit from it.

If you wish to contact a contributor please send your message to one of the addresses above and we will pass it on.

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SEAL Update continued...

has made maintaining the pages much easier. Gary Storm has taken over regularly updating the pages with particular emphasis on reporting important Amiga news on the News page. Gary has also been busy interviewing various Amiga celebrities, his recent victims include Andrew Korn (formerly of CU Amiga) and Petro Tyschtschenko of Amiga International (you can also read that interview on page 9 of this issue).

Another recent addition to the site is a new look Clubbed page which always has the latest information on the magazine, subscription prices and progress on the next issue.

Visit the SEAL web site at:
<http://seal.amiga.tm>

Please make sure you use the address above to access the SEAL web site as it is possible the real address will change soon as I may be moving ISP.

Meetings

Starting in May we decided to make the programme of our bi-weekly meetings a bit more organised by allocating every other meeting to a general Amiga Workshop evening where members can bring along their machines to get help or show others their set-up. The other meetings will have an organised event of some kind, for example a tutorial or question and answer session.

The first meeting in this new plan took place in May when David gave us an introduction to shell scripting, including how to launch shell scripts from icons to run shell only programs from the Workbench. In June Mick Sutton and Robert Williams gave a demonstration of various image capture methods including digital cameras, scanners and PhotoCD.

The next event meeting is going to be an image processing demonstration where several different packages will be shown including the latest version of Photogenics. Due to work on SEAL's presence at the WoA this presentation will take place after the show.

The Amiga Workshop evenings have also proved a great success with many problems being solved at all levels of Amiga use. Within SEAL we have members at all levels from those just starting out with the Amiga to people with years of experience and high end systems, all this knowledge is put to good use!

Jim Collas Meeting

At the end of April Jim Collas (CEO of Amiga) came to Europe to meet representatives of the Amiga community. He visited the UK and Germany which have the largest base of Amiga users in Europe. SEAL members Gary Storm and Robert Williams were lucky enough to be asked to attend the UK meeting that took place in London. We met Jim informally in a hotel bar after the main presentation to the media and developers had been made and came away with a great feeling about the future of the Amiga, both Classic and NG. You can read more about what we heard in Gary's Amiga Inc. update section.

WoA Involvement

SEAL is heavily involved in this years World of Amiga show which is being jointly organised by PBA events (who have organised the show in previous years) and AmigaSoc (the UK usergroup representatives). Robert Williams has designed the WoA brochure for potential exhibitors and as soon as this issue of Clubbed is finished will be working on the programme that all visitors will receive. At the show itself SEAL members will be helping out by manning areas like the Games arcade and the cybercafe as well as some less glamorous jobs.

Members of the SEAL committee have been to several WoA organisers meetings in London and everyone involved is working hard to make this the best WoA ever.

SEAL will have a stand at the show that we will be using to advertise the club, hopefully getting some new members and of course sell copies of Clubbed.

Phase 5 68k Products

Since the introduction of its PowerUP line of PowerPC accelerator boards Phase 5 has stopped production of their range of 68000 only accelerators, SCSI modules and the CyberVision 64/3D Zorro graphics cards. This has left a significant gap in the market for high performance 68k based accelerators. In general these products had a good reputation for not only their high performance but also reliability and quality of manufacture. DCE, another German Amiga hardware manufacturer who produce, amongst other things, the Typhoon A1200 accelerator have now signed a deal with Phase 5 to produce many of their 68k only products. Boards going back into production include:

- Blizzard 1230, 1240 and 1260 A1200 accelerators
- Blizzard SCSI Module DMA SCSI for the above accelerators
- Blizzard 2040/60 Accelerators for the A2000 with built in DMA SCSI
- CyberStorm MkIII 68060 for the A3000 and 4000 with DMA UW SCSI
- CyberVision 64/3D Zorro 2/3 gfx card
- CyberVision 64/3D Scan Doubler

These products will be available from Power Computing:
(01234) 851500
<http://www.powerc.com/>



Amiga Helpline

Would you like you help other Amiga users or do you sometimes need a helping hand with your system? If so the Amiga helpline could be for you. This free service consists of volunteer helpers who specialise in a particular aspect of the Amiga. Users who need help can ring a central number and be put in touch with a specialist in the field they need help with. If you'd like to be a helper or need help yourself give Terry a ring on (01709) 814296.

AmigaOS 3.5

As part of Amiga's renewed commitment to the Classic Amiga market the Amiga OS 3.5 update has been confirmed, the project has been contracted to Haage and Partner who are co-ordinating many programmers including well known PD and Shareware authors to produce the upgrade. OS 3.5 will be released at Amiga Downunder 99 in Australia on the 21st and 22nd of August.

OS 3.5 will require AmigaOS 3.1 ROMs which are currently available from most Amiga dealers, Power Computing have announced that they will offer the ROMs at reduced prices (A500/2000 £14.95, A1200/3000/4000 £19.95) if they are purchased with OS3.5.

Key features of the new version include:

New Standard GUI Toolkit

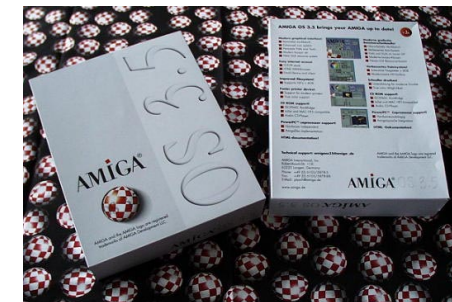
A new GUI toolkit and interface builder application will be provided with the OS giving programmers a powerful standard

GUI with features like font sensitivity and resizable windows as part of the OS. All the preferences editors and other OS programs will be re-written to use the new GUI system. The new GUI toolkit is based on the ClassAct system currently available. Programs using other GUI systems like MUI, GT Layout and BGUI will continue to work.

Enhanced Workbench and Icons

Built-in Internet Support

A TCP/IP stack (based on Miami), Web browser (based on AWeb) and EMail client will be provided with the OS to get users up and running on the Internet quickly. The web browser will also be used to view the new documentation that will be in HTML format. Users will be able to use their existing Internet software if they wish. The EMail client will be based on a new EMail library allowing direct EMail facilities to be built into other applications while still sharing the same mail boxes etc.



Improved Printing

An all new printing system with support for 24bit printing to the latest printers will be included along with a brand new integrated printer preferences program.

PowerPC

PowerPC support using Haage and Partner's WarpUP system, this will provide support for the current Phase 5 PowerUP accelerators and for the recently announced G3 and G4 based cards as they come to market. Also included will be a PPC preferences editor which will make setting up PPC accelerators much more user friendly.

Further details are on the Amiga website at:

<http://www.amiga.com/>

Three G3 Accelerators Announced

In March several surprise hardware announcements shocked the on-line Amiga community, injecting some much needed life into discussions and debates. Some time ago the previously little known German company Escena announced they were producing a PowerPC G3 based accelerator which would plug into a Zorro III slot. This card is different to the current Phase 5 PPC cards because it does not have a 68000 series CPU and will run 68k based Amiga programs (including the OS) via a 68k emulation that is being written by Haage and Partner. All had been quiet save for a few updates on this front for a number of months when OS 3.5 with PPC support was announced. This was the springboard for three more companies to announce plans for new PowerPC only accelerators:

PowerPC G3 based Amiga accelerators to be called Amijoe. The A1200 version will have local RAM and an expansion slot for either a USB or SCSI II module, the board and module will fit in a desktop A1200 or tower. The second board will be for the A2/3/4000 series Amigas and we assume it must be a Zorro card to fit in this range of machines. This board will have the processor and memory plus a PCI 2.1 compatible bus slot for a third card called the Multijoe. The Multijoe will have SCSI and a graphics card on board plus PCI slots for standard PCI cards (assuming drivers are written).

Phase 5

Phase 5 have announced they aim to produce PowerPC G3 and G4 based accelerators for the A1200 and A3/4000, both the Phase 5 cards will have SCSI and firewire ports on board and a PCI slot for a PCI backplane. P5 have not confirmed they will be producing the backplane and of course any cards fitted to it would require Amiga drivers. The CPU on the Phase 5 cards is mounted

on an industry standard module which will allow them to offer both G3 and G4 versions when the PPC G4 is released, it will also allow G3 owners to upgrade. Initially Phase 5 said they would require 1000 pre-orders to justify developing these cards. However although they have not announced if this number has been reached work does seem to be happening on the boards.

Titan Computer

Titan along with Haage and Partner and ACT (Apollo) have announced the Twister PPC which is an A1200 (Tower required) only G3 accelerator. This card can also carry two modules, one is a Ultra-Wide SCSI interface and the other a graphics card based on the RIVA TNT chip. The Riva TNT is well respected in the PC world and give fast 2D and 3D acceleration.

All three G3 cards have planned release dates of fourth quarter 1999.

Met@box - <http://www.joecard.com/>
Phase 5 - <http://www.phase5.de/>
Titan - <http://www.titancomputer.de/>



If you're looking for the latest Amiga news on the Internet try the excellent Czech Amiga News web site:
<http://www.realdreams.cz/amiga>

World of Amiga 1999

After months of speculation we are pleased to be able to report the World of Amiga show will be held again this year and that SEAL along with other usergroups are involved in making this years show much more of an "event" than in previous years. The driving forces behind this year's show are PBA Events who have organised it in the past and AmigaSoc the UK User Group Network representatives. After many complaints that the Novatel was a far from ideal venue you'll be pleased to hear that the show will be moving to much more professional surroundings in the form of the Kensington Town Hall Conference Centre.

This venue while being a similar size to the Novatel offers four areas for a wide range of events. The great hall will hold the exhibitors and the foyer on the same floor will be allocated to Amiga and exhibitors such as magazines. Upstairs is a large conference room that will be used for presentations and seminars throughout the event. Also upstairs is another foyer area, this will be set aside for usergroup events. Each usergroup will have their own table and it is hoped

Photogenics 4 ImageFX 4

Paul Nolan has released the long awaited new version of Photogenics. This version is a complete re-write and has very little in common with version 2 except some basic concepts. Exciting additions are a full layers implementation and some brilliant paint-on fire effects. The initial release version was rather buggy and Paul has been working hard to iron out the problems (although he has found the time to get married, congratulations Paul!). A fixed version 4.1 is due very soon, some SEAL members have used a beta version of the 4.1 upgrade and it seems much faster and more stable than the original release.

If 4.1 is released in time we hope to have a review in the next issue of Clubbed. For more information and to download the 4.1 upgrade when it is available visit:

<http://www.photogenics.co.uk>

most will bring along an Amiga to demonstrate different products. Several usergroups have already committed to running a games arcade and an Internet cafe to keep visitors entertained. On both days of the show various Amiga usergroups will be running how-to sessions which will take the form of building an A1200 tower system over the day. Sessions will include putting an A1200 in a tower, fitting hard drives and CD-ROMs and installing a graphics card.

World of Amiga 1999 will take place on Saturday the 24th and Sunday the 25th of July. Opening times are 9:30 to 17:00 on Saturday and 9:30 to 16:00 Sunday.

Ticket prices are £7.50 for Adults, £5 for under 14s, £6 for OAPs.

Full details including travel options and secure ticket ordering are available on the World of Amiga web site at <http://www.worldofamiga.com>.

Alternatively you can call the ticket hotline on (01369) 708004.

In a surprise statement Nova Design Inc. announced that version 4 of ImageFX will soon be available. The key new feature is animation support allowing brushes and effects to be animated directly from the main user interface including a real-time preview. You will be able to directly load and save animations in a variety of formats suitable for both video and Internet web sites.

Three new effects are also supplied with version 4, fireworks, distorter and blob. Many other features have been updated to work with the new animation functions.

IFX 4 will be distributed on CDROM along with a variety of example images and animations. Upgrades are available directly from Nova Design and I'm sure they will soon be available from Compute! the UK distributor.

Compute: (0181) 3031800
Nova: <http://www.novadesign.com/>

Fusion & PPC

When Phase 5 released its PowerUP PPC accelerators everyone hoped that a Power Mac emulator running directly on the PPC would be released.

Well it's been a long wait but it now looks like we will see a PPC version of Fusion in the next few months. Microcode Solutions, Fusion's developers asked for 500 pre-orders of the program which costs about £90 by the end of June. This target was reached with time to spare and they will be collecting payments during the next month. Once the money has been collected they promise to deliver Fusion PPC in no more than 60 days. If all goes to plan we should have Fusion PPC by the end of September.

Microcode were also taking Pre-orders for a PPC version of their PCx PC emulator but this didn't manage to attract 500 pledges in the time.

Fusion is sold in the UK by Blittersoft: (01908) 261466
<http://www.blittersoft.com/>

WipeOut 2097



This well-known 3D racing game from the PlayStation and PC is coming to an Amiga near you as long as it is equipped with PPC and a 3D graphics card supported by Warp3D. Digital Images have acquired the rights from Psygnosis to port the game to the Amiga and recently published the first screen-shots of the Amiga version on their web site, including shots of the game running in a Window!

T-zero Is Ready

ClickBoom are set to release their latest game on July the 23rd. T-zero is a great looking shoot-em-up which requires AGA, 8Mb and an '030. The game features beautiful hand pixelated graphics, 1 or 2 player modes and huge between level animations.

<http://clickboom.com/>

Amiga Update

Gary Storm reports the latest happenings at Amiga and speculates on what the future might hold.

Amiga have been fairly active over the last few months, mainly in part due to the direction eventually being cemented by Jim Collas. Since he's been on board the Amiga love-boat it's been steering out of the Gateway icebergs, and heading towards clear water. Let's just hope it hits a rich and verdant land.

There's been so much stuff happening:

Amiga International. & Inc. Are no more... simply AMIGA now.

We met Jim in London at the end of April, and it was very interesting. He's a down-to-earth guy, who doesn't seem to sprout crap.

The Amiga range will consist of 'information appliances', controlled by a central computer, all connected via wireless radio technology and controlled via a 'tablet' hand-held PDA-like device. Apparently wireless technology is being pursued by many technology companies, as it offers data transfer rates of 4mb per second for the home network, and is seen as the future of computing and communication (just think of all the wonderful things you can use a mobile phone for now: Internet, TV, sending pictures and e-mail). The business version of Amiga technology will run via cable and offer much larger rates of transfer, for the office networks.

During our chat, Jim also let it be known that Amiga are trying to find out if it's possible to have a version of 'AmigaSoft 1.0' (the next-gen os) running on PPC Amiga's, to give the current Amiga market a lot more life, and an easier upgrade path. It may not be possible to do this, but at least they're going to try, which is good. Even more reason to go PPC, apart from getting the best out of OS3.5 (which will be previewed at WoA '99, and released 21st of August, in Australia).

Pentagram have been assigned the task of making the next Amiga range look nice and (hopefully) funky. They're an international, award winning design company, who have been responsible for excellent efforts like the Toshiba range of PC's, and B&W speaker (which are ultra-cool). Pentagram also have

fantastic design concepts for computing, which include a space-saving design of having the main unit (with things you don't need to access much like the modem, hard-drive, cabling, power etc.) in an elongated, wall-hugging frame, and the bits you do need to use often (CD-ROM, floppy drive, etc.), housed in an arch which your keyboard can sit under when not in use. Nice. You may have seen the designs in August's Amiga Format... doesn't that 'Starck' design look so cool, and so much like the Star Trek logo?

Amiga have been recruiting a fair amount of talented staff recently, especially C++, Java, and os environment experts. Foremost amongst the engineers would have to be the former IBM and Apple (amongst others) head of hardware design and development Rick LaFaire. They've just recruited Dave Curtis (CORBAL expert) as 'director of object technology and transaction services' and Jim Miller (also ex-Apple) as director of user experience (the way we and the computer interface). With people like Rick, Jim Van Holle, Dr. Havemose and (of course) Jim Collas, there would have to be some pretty brilliant stuff being done in the Amiga building, as these guys have just about every huge company head-hunting them. Jim especially must have oceans of faith in the new Amiga technology... why else would he risk his glowing reputation and career by stepping down as VP of Gateway to be CEO of a little, oft ignored, credibility lacking Amiga?

Jim's focus during May was to break away from Gateway, to become a semi-independent company free of the parent company's sloth and politics. Ted Waitt also very interested in seeing Amiga be a success, and realised it needed to be a separate entity to increase the speed of development. Ted Waitt had an interview with 'The Guardian On-line' recently, where he stated that the Amiga developments were interesting, but that it won't be computer related. This of course, freaked out a fair few Amigans, who aren't used to the tactic of disinformation, so Jim had to issue a statement re-iterating Amiga's resolve to bring out the revolutionary software and hardware by the end of the year, and

that it would definitely include a computer.

Breaking News

The absolute latest is the excellent news of Jim wanting to tell us much more, as he said in his June/July update...

"We are putting together a five to seven page product strategy and technology brief that will be released to the Amiga community within the next week. This brief will help you better understand our overall plans by giving you more details on our new Amiga Operating Environment (OE) and Multimedia Convergence Computer (MCC). The technology brief will also talk about new and exciting Amiga technology. This brief will also disclose some of our 3rd party technology choices. We have spent the last four months evaluating technology and defining the next generation hardware architecture and software structure. We have now finalized the architecture and structure. We have also finalized all of our major technology and partner choices. A significant amount of effort and resources went into the evaluation of 3rd party technology you may be surprised at a few of the decisions but I am confident you will agree that they are the correct choices". [If possible, we'll try and include a supplement if this brief appears before we send out the mag].

Jim then went on to give a few hints...

"Our strategy for implementing the new Amiga is to integrate the best technology in the industry into a new, efficient, exciting, and revolutionary computer platform focused on the future... On the CPU side we have selected a CPU that will bring exciting new capabilities to the Amiga. I can't disclose what instruction set it uses at this time because of confidentiality agreements. I can tell you that it's very exciting and NOT an x86 architecture processor. Our plan is to disclose the CPU in several weeks at the World of Amiga and AmiWest shows. At this time I hope to disclose all of our technology choices and partners... In order to pull this great technology together and develop our next-generation platform, we are also developing our own technology in key strategic areas. This technology will allow us to make the product unique, integrate 3rd party technology and create the final revolutionary product. For example:

A TEASER:

The technology brief will also include the description of new Amiga technology that I think is particularly exciting. It is an object-oriented technology developed by Amiga called the AmigaObjectTM. The AmigaObjectTM is a powerful software structure that enables easy integration of technology, distributed computing, high-speed network transactions, and communication between applications. They are also powerful software building blocks that will allow people to build impressive applications quickly. AmigaObjectsTM are portable and transferable across platforms allowing AmigaObjectsTM to proliferate throughout the network, the Internet and the world. Do I have your attention yet? This is just one piece of the new Amiga operating environment. It is this type of technology that will allow us to build a revolutionary computer platform. We can discuss this technology because we have now filed patent disclosures giving us some protection against competitors. More on this in the technology brief".

NOTE: The following is purely conjecture, and not gospel.

Hmmm. Surely these modern legends of Silicon Valley would have learnt by the mistakes of other, more hyped-to-the-hilt machines (3dO, CD32, CDTV, Jaguar, etc.) that were released with bugged-all software to show off their fancy chips. I believe they have (even if they're trying to avoid the subject). Read on...

The Amiga people aren't stupid. If they were stupid, they wouldn't be seen (individually) with such respect. As they have the respect of a hugely critical and accomplishment-driven industry, we can assume that they are, in fact, pretty bloody clever. Given that obvious intelligence and respect, it can't possibly be a bad move to work for Amiga, and there must be a pretty good reason to put your faith (and that hard-won respect) in a small company like that, what could have attracted them?

First, let's look at what the marketplace is now, over 80% Wintel PC domination. Not a good thing, it is generally agreed. Mac's are better, but are still too insular and expensive. The computer industry is in decline as people become jaded with having to put up with dodgy software and upgrading every 6 months (and re-installing their system every year).

So what's looking hot at the moment? Could it be mobile phones, the Internet, and digital TV? Yep, and collectively these information appliances, and other products like PDA's (personal digital assistants - Psions, PalmPilots etc.) are, according to a major report by 4th Wave, going to be the focus of the computer industry during the next ten years. The report also suggests that hardware importance will be equalled, then outweighed, by service and support contracts.

We know Amiga are going to release various 'information appliances', controlled via AmigaSoft in each and a central computer, connected via wireless radio technology. But the computer won't be much good if there isn't software to run on it. I believe (contrary to what they would have us think) that Amiga have this covered too, in the unique and simple way that they have possibly structured the hardware and software design, integrating the two into a seamless yet near-infinitely malleable whole.

It would be a practically impossible task to infiltrate from afresh the PC market, without having as much software compatibility with PC's, and as many PC standards embedded within the new Amiga as possible. But how? At last year's WoA, when the 'Mystery Chip' that would drive the new Amiga was announced, many were speculating that it's origins could have something to do with research into 'multiple gate array' chips, which are processor designs which have the ability to emulate in hardware (via the gate's changing) other processors, just like a Chameleon. Since Dr. Havemose had shifted the focus off that possibility by saying that they haven't decide on a final processor yet, speculation (and confirmation from Jim) has suggested that the short-list must be between Transmeta, Power G3, Alpha and MIPS. This, in my opinion, has shifted the focus off the true source of Amiga power - the object orientated os. I think the AmigaOE (AmigaSoft and AmigaObjects) will be the key that unlocks the worlds computer market, by being able (in different strengths) to be installed on all platforms in a similar way that Java is now. It will breathe new life into the PC industry, and be at it's most powerful on it's native Amiga architecture which everyone (hopefully) will gravitate to. Java and all the current (and some future) PC standards will be embedded in the Amiga.

And what if AmigaSoft 1.0 wasn't the only Chameleon with red-and-white checked eyes? There have been murmurings of SOC (system on a chip) processors under development, such as Java on a chip. I'm not a techie (as you know), but this sounds like Java will be much faster if it was already resident in hardware on a dedicated chip. And if that chip was flash-ROM'able, then it need never be out of date (exit lot's of needless hardware upgrades). Taking this further, what's there to stop other operating systems from being embedded in flash-ROM chips? Then all you'd need is the software within AmigaSoft (also possibly on a chip) that has different 'departments' assigned the task of communicating and interpreting the commands from the relevant os chip. At the end of the day, you'd have a computer that would be able to utilise nearly every bit of software from all the major platforms (PC-DOS; Windows; Linux; MacOS etc.). Changing over to this new computer platform would be as painless as possible (all the benefits with no loss of current data). In fact, I'll lay bets that Amiga has been courting current PC software developers (through Jim and Rick's contacts) to prime them for the Amiga rebirth. Expect some of those 'strategic partners' to be announced at WoA '99 (hopefully one will be Sony, using AmigaSoft on the PSX2).

The new Amiga range will be a true Chameleon on it's own hardware and current configurations able to utilise most software. I'm sure it's more than possible that we'll be seeing a version of AmigaSoft on PPC Amiga's, but the reason I think that Jim Collas isn't guaranteeing it isn't to do with technical reasons, but rather whether they have the spare time to implement that support in the time they have left. AmigaSoft PPC will come, but it may not be until after the Amiga has taken us into the 5th generation of computing.

At the end of the day, if Amiga don't overshoot their deadline by too much, the end of this year (or early next) will see the revival of not only Amiga, but also of computing as a whole, as everyone who knows anything about computing knows, Windows and the current underlying PC architecture is a thorn in the foot of true progress. I've said it before, but would you really trust the lives of you and your children to a Wintel space-ship when we colonise the stars?

Petro Tyschtschenko

Gary Storm talks to the man who's been keeping the Amiga alive since the death of Commodore.

Age: 56 years

Occupation: Managing Director Amiga International, Inc. Langen Germany

Petro, thanks for connecting with Clubbed. What have you been up to today?

Up to day: The WOA is the current project to organise... We will have a video wall 4x4 Animation and video films... Jim, Tom and Rick will come from the USA. Nicole, Axel and myself from Germany.

The last few years have been hell for Amiga developers, retailers and users. What have you been doing to try and stem the tide of Amiga defectors?

The last two years were very hard for me... no support from the US mother, no sight for new products. So I tried to keep the spirit alive with user support, merchandise products and looking after new markets like embedded systems, to survive until the next miracle happens... and the miracle came with Jim Collas... who is the right man to drive AMIGA in the right directions, with a lot of US influence. Thank God we have another chance. I am quite sure that we will have a bright future.

Why do you think there are so many Amiga users who still stick with the classic Amiga? Why does this particular collection of PCB and solder engender such patriotism?

The current AMIGA technology is so great and simple, it is fun to use an AMIGA. It is not fun to have to work with a PC, especially a Wintel...

You don't use an Amiga at the office. Why not? It's more capable than a PC for e-mail.

Unfortunately I not only have to do my e-mail, I have electronic banking and I have to report to my PC-Gateway mother, where nobody can read and understand AMIGA, so I am forced to use a PC... a Gateway one of course.

This could of course change in the near future but my philosophy is to use every tool, even a PC, to make my beloved AMIGA stronger...

OS3.5 was great news for the Amiga community. How is it coming along, and when do you think it will be released?

We are quite in time. The official launch will be in Australia in Canberra, 21st and 22nd of August. Beta version will be distributed to developers which applied, this week and next week.

We'll be getting a preview at WoA '99 though, won't we?

Yes of course. Haage & Partner will show the preview at WOA on our video wall.

What other stuff will be shown at WoA '99?

As I mentioned already... Jim Collas, Rick LeFaivre and Tom Schmidt will come to London... and for sure they will bring some news with them... I can not tell you too much today... should be a great surprise.

Have you seen the next-gen designs and plans yet?

Of course. We are working as a team... a great team by the way. I am regularly in the US and I am informed in detail.

If so, what do you think?

It is great... as Jim Collas always states: A REVOLUTION.

What could be improved in the next-gen Amiga range?

I really do not know, what I should answer here at this stage, the next-gen is perfect so far.

How do you think the next-gen Amiga will be marketed?

Through our existing distributor network... of course the high-street market, mail-order houses and computer shops will also be interested in our product if the margin is right and the product is interesting for them. We will not let down our loyal dealers and distributors of course.

Which markets are the next-gen Amiga products going to target?

We will come out with details in London..

What is the Amiga competition?

Amiga never had competition... Amiga is unique.

The boing ball... going to stay as the Amiga logo?

Of course. I am proud that I have reborn this logo.

Any idea what advertising budget the next-gen Amiga range will have, and where you're likely to use it? The Commodore marketing team used to advertise Amigas in Amiga magazines, and... well that's it really.

It is a little too early for exact dates...but you can be sure there will be a budget, we have to launch the new generation very professionally and we would mobilise also AMIGA freaks, which are using today unfortunately the PC platform.

When will the Amiga plans start being above the radar. When can we expect to know concrete details about things, and start promoting them to the rest of the world?

Jim Collas will tell some more details on the WOA.

Realistically, how much of an impact on the world computing market do you think the next-gen Amigas will make?

It will as I mentioned already, be a real revolution.

Will user groups be able to get OS3.5 and the 3.1 ROM chips at a special discount?

Unfortunately we are not doing any money on our OS 3.5... the price is very attractive... end user price is scheduled in Germany for 99.50 DM (about £35 Ed.)

What role can user-groups play in the resurrection of Amiga credibility?

They should keep on doing what they have done always... making propaganda for our AMIGA...

If you were stranded on a desert island, and could only have three things with you... what would they be?

What a question... I need only two things... An AMIGA and an internet line...

What do you like to use your computer for, Petro?

Amiga for relaxing... PC for working

Would Amiga Chameleon be a good name-brand for the next-gen Amiga range? :)

Chameleon? Should be more dynamic... SPRITER or REVOLUZZER.

Thanks Petro. NOTE: Read the Amiga Update and meandering for the reason behind 'Chameleon' question.

WWW (World Wide Web)

AWeb - <http://www.amitrix.com> (pg 26)
 IBrowse - <http://www.hisoft.co.uk> (pg 22)
 Voyager - <http://www.vapor.com> (pg 18)

The World Wide Web (WWW or simply the web) is probably the friendliest face of the Internet. It presents you with pages of text and graphical information which are linked together via clickable hot spots on the screen. Pages are grouped together in to a website, most companies, organisations, in fact nearly every one has a web site now, and you see web addresses almost everywhere. The web is accessed using software called a browser. The Amiga is blessed with three fine web browsers all of which do a good job letting you access most web sites.

Originally the web was designed to be as open as possible and accessible from a wide variety of computers, and so that the way pages are displayed could be controlled by the user. As the web developed page designers wanted to have more control over what the page viewer saw and also to incorporate more sophisticated interactive content. The result of this demand means that some websites are now designed to look good on the most popular web browsers (inevitably on the PC platform) and use proprietary technologies which again are only available on the most popular platforms. All that said, most websites can be viewed with no problems using Amiga browsers, though occasionally you'll find a website that simply cannot be viewed which in almost all cases is simply shortsightedness on the part of its author.

The most amazing thing about the web is its freedom... anyone with an Internet connection can create a webpage. The HTML format is simply a text file, so you don't need any particular computer to do it. Most ISPs, even the free ones, offer space on their servers to carry your pages so that doesn't cost any money either. This means you will find websites on any and every subject under the sun. Some are great some aren't but the wealth of information is unbelievable. For some ideas on where to start looking and how to search for information on the web mosey along to our Hot Websites feature on page 38.

Get Netted!

Robert Williams helps you get On-Line

Contrary to popular (PC-user) opinion, the Amiga is not stuck in the late 80's and they're not all Amiga 500's. Also contrary to popular opinion, the Amiga is a more Internet efficient computer than a PC, thanks to its multi-tasking architecture and less crash-prone OS and software. You can even get your A500 on the net. Thanks to free software and free internet service providers, there has never been a better time to get your Amiga connected.

But what is the internet? What's the point?

The Internet, and World Wide Web (WWW), is a gargantuan network of computers, all connected to each other in the same way a spider-web is, except this web transfers Information, which can be pictures, sounds, text, and programs. Think of the net as the biggest library in the world, where you can make as much noise as you want. Whatever you're interested in, you'll find it, and other people who are interested in the same things.

Owning an alternative, 'cult' computer like the Amiga, is even more incentive to get connected. Converse with other Amigans all over the world, keep up to date and even influence the direction of the platform and software. We even have the world's single largest online

About This Feature

The main text of this feature (on the white background) explains why you might want to get connected to the Internet and what you need to do so.

The grey side columns explain the most popular Internet services and how you can access them with your Amiga. At the top of each section is a selection of the available programs along with the address of their website and the page where they are reviewed in this issue (if we have). Please note that the lists are not definitive there are more Amiga Internet programs than we could possibly list but hopefully this will give you a good starting point.

shareware archive, in Aminet. Downloading heaven!

One of the best things about the internet is that it's an immediate resource. As soon as any news happens, the net hears about it first. As soon as a programmer has finished the latest version of his software, the internet is where you'll get it first.

Communication

E-mail is a fantastic thing. Keep in touch with your relatives, friends, work or anything from all over the world as long as they're connected too. You save a fortune on postage and non-local telephone calls. You can even chat real-time to them by using Amirc and STRicq (more about them elsewhere). An invaluable resource is being able to get help and advice from users all over the world, and even the authors themselves of the programs you use (who better to ask how to do something?).

Money

Invest a hundred or so on getting connected, and you can save money by getting the best prices for stuff you want to buy (from all over the world), saving petrol (you don't have to go to the library), postage (shareware and letters), and information (there are plenty of people to ask for advice on what you should and shouldn't buy). You save time and (as you know) 'time is money'.

Time

The internet saves you time, because instead of waiting for (eg) a shareware program or update to appear on a coverd or being posted to you, or trawling through your local library in the hope they've got a picture or information you want in one of their out-dated books, or hoping the news has the details of that win by Gillingham (etcetc), just hop on the net and search for that program/picture/music/video/information that you want.

Get Connected

So, for a small fee, you can have all the

information in the world at your fingertips, and build up a huge collection of whatever you want (music, graphics, software, video's etc etc). What are you waiting for? Read on and find out about the most popular internet services, how to get on-line and the best software to use to get you there!

What You Need to get On-Line To connect to the Internet you need four things:

1. A Suitable Amiga

All Amigas can be connected to the Internet via a standard Internet Service Provider, but there are a few minimum spec's you'll need to have to use Internet services successfully. The processor you have is not that important (even a 68000 can get connected), but for browsing the web a 68030 would be the minimum I'd recommend. Also for web browsers and many other Internet applications you'll need at least AmigaOS version 3.0. 4Mb of Fast Memory is about the minimum required for reasonable use of most Internet programs, although the more you have the better. Pre-AGA machines aren't too good for web browsing as they only have 16 colours on higher resolution screens... a graphics card makes the world of difference of course.

2. A Modem

A modem is a piece of hardware which is used to connect computers together over the phone lines. In the case of an Internet connection your modem connects you to your Internet Provider and thus the Internet. Fortunately for us Amiga users almost all modems use a common set of basic commands called Hayes commands. This means most modems you can buy will work with your Amiga. As usual though you have to be a little bit careful - many modems are designed to fit internally to a PC and these can't be used. Another type are the so called "Win" modems which require particular Windows software (hence the name) and can't be used on the Amiga. What we need is a standard external modem. All external modems plug into the serial port of your Amiga, and when you buy

your modem you need to make sure it comes with a 25pin connector (some come with a 9pin one which needs an adaptor).

Modems are rated by the maximum speed they can transfer data at, in bits per second. The most common standards you'll see today are 33600bps (33.6k) and 56000 (56k), however the actual speed you achieve depends on the quality of your phone line and how far you are from the exchange. 56k modems in particular are very sensitive to line quality and very few people get much over 50k with between 40 and 50 being quite common.

You can expect to pay about £70 to £90 for a brand name 56k modem, if you shop around you can find unbranded ones for much less but in general these seem to be less tolerant of poor lines.

3. An Internet Service Provider

To access the Internet from a home computer you need an Internet Service Provider (commonly abbreviated to ISP), these organisations have a network permanently connected to the internet and allow you to connect to their network and thus the Internet via a dial-up (modem) connection. Before you can connect to an ISP you need to set up an account on their system, during this process you choose a username and password so only you can access your account and thus E-mails and other personal services. Different ISPs handle setting up accounts in different ways.

E-Mail

MicroDot - <http://www.vapor.com> (pg 24)
 Thor - <http://www.thule.no> (pg 25)
 YAM - <http://www.yam.ch> (pg 24)

With EMail you can send text messages to anyone as long as they have an EMail address and you know what it is! One of the services your ISP provides is to hold your EMail on their servers while you are off-line for you to collect the next time you connect to the Internet. Almost all ISPs use a protocol called POP3 (Post Office Protocol version 3) for collection of messages. With this system you download mail using EMail software. When you write EMail you send it to your ISP whose mail servers then send it on to its destination across the Internet. Mail is usually sent to the ISP using SMTP (the Simple Mail Transfer Protocol).

As well as plain text you can send files of all types by Email, and these are called attachments. Attachments are encoded into blocks of text which look just like garbage letters if your mailer doesn't understand them. Most modern EMail programs automatically decode attachments and allow them to be saved, some even allow images to be viewed with the message.

One of the main differences between ISPs is the way they allocate EMail addresses. Some ISPs give you your own node name, for example mine is williams.demon.co.uk, this means you can have any number of EMail addresses simply by changing the user name before the @ sign. The other option is to have a pre-defined EMail address, for example username@myisp.com, this you only have one address. Most use this scheme allow you to have additional EMail addresses to arrange that with the address can be used.

Lists are a useful application of mailing list server is setup on a connected (usually permanent) Internet, then anyone who joins the list sends an EMail to the server containing a command which adds them to the list. Once subscribed you can send E-mails to a mailing list address and the server will send them to all the people subscribed to it and you will of course receive all sent by other list members.



New Groups (Usenet)

MicroDot - <http://www.vapor.com> (pg 24)
 NewsRog (Not Reviewed)
<http://www.frii.com/~srk/ShadowWorks/Preview/NR.html>
 Thor - <http://www.thule.no> (pg 25)

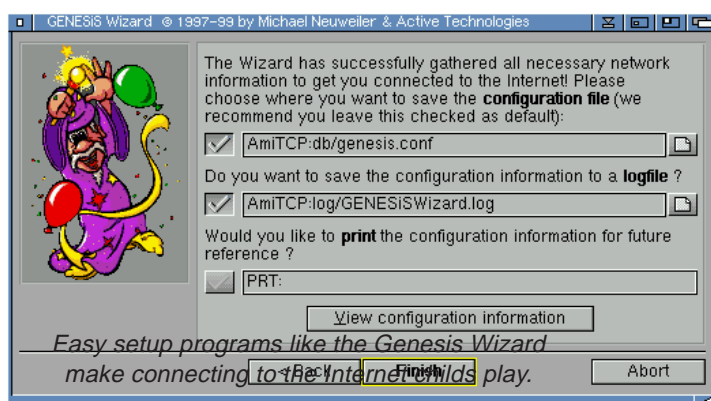
Usenet is a text based discussion system which is split into a large number (tens of thousands) of news groups each dedicated to a different topic. The available newsgroups are arranged in a hierarchy to make it a little easier to find a group which discusses a particular topic. A typical newsgroup name would be: comp.sys.amiga.hardware. comp groups are about computers, other top level groups include:

alt - alternative, can be about anything!
 rec - recreational discussions
 sci - scientific subjects
 uk - discussions specific to the UK.

You access new groups using a client called a News Reader on your Amiga, this software will allow you to "subscribe" to the newsgroups you are interested in and then download the messages posted to them. To make finding groups on subjects you are interested in easier, news readers can download a list of groups on your ISP's newserver and usually offer a search facility to find groups containing a particular key word. Using a client on your Amiga there are two ways of reading news: on-line and off-line. Some clients support both types and others only one. Online reading means that the client will download only the headers of all the new posts in a particular group and when you spot a subject that looks interesting it will download that post from the server. Obviously you need to be on-line all the time during this process. An off-line news reader will download all the new posts in the newsgroups you're subscribed to so you can read them off-line. If you choose to reply or post a new message an off-line reader will store the post and send it to the server next time you're on-line.

On Usenet you'll often find that discussions start by people replying to others' posts, forming what is called a thread. Because people read newsgroups at different times threads are often not linear and break off into branches, a good newsreader will control this for you allowing you to see how messages follow each other.

Continued on page 13...



When less people were on the 'net you had to phone most ISPs to setup your account, they would take your payment details and give you the required information to set up your software. More recently, "get on the net" CDs and disks have been provided which setup software and create the account, however in most cases these are only for PC and perhaps Mac users. Most ISPs that supply a setup disk can create an account manually for you if you phone them, or you could always set up your account on a PC then transfer the details to your Amiga (beware that installing Internet software on a PC can often stop an existing installation from working).

Most Internet Providers can be used with the Amiga even if they don't directly support it (although you'll be on your own if you need technical support). The ones to watch out for are those that need special software for access which may only run on the PC or Mac (Compuserve and AOL fall into this category). There's now such a wide choice of ISPs that work on the Amiga and even quite a few that directly support it that you shouldn't have any problems finding one that suits you without venturing into the unknown with an ISP no one else has tried.

There are now many Internet Providers who have no fees, but rather get their income from the telephone company who provides the local rate lines you ring when you connect. The only snag with most of these services is that they provide telephone technical support only on a premium rate number which can cost upto £1 per minute. As most ISPs don't support the Amiga directly and have free EMail support many people find they hardly ever have to use the tech lines, so this may not be an issue. On the other hand if your connection stops working for no apparent reason a call to the ISP may be your only option.

and if you are willing to restrict your usage to the weekends this could actually work out cheaper than a free ISP!

As most Internet services can be used on the Amiga it's well worth keeping your eyes open for the service that best suits your usage pattern. Over the next few months I expect we'll see far more different options for getting on-line as the multitude of ISPs try to differentiate from their competitors and the traditional ISPs attempt to win customers back from the new free ones. Remember that you can always sign up for a free account, see how you use the Internet then move to another ISP that better suits you later. The only problem with this approach is that you will lose your EMail and web space addresses.

For more information on ISPs and a step-by-step guide to getting connected via Freeserve see our tutorial on page 14.

4. A TCP/IP Stack

The TCP/IP stack is the hub of all the Internet software on your Amiga (or in fact any computer). TCP/IP stands for Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol and is the protocol which all the computers on the 'net use to communicate with each other. All the Internet programs you run on your Amiga access the TCP/IP stack to send and receive data from the Internet. Fortunately all the TCP/IP stacks available follow the same standard so you can use almost all Internet programs with all the stacks (there are a few exceptions of software supplied with one TCP/IP stack only working with that one). The two most popular stacks (Genesis and Miami) both contain all the functions you need to access and ISP including a dialer (which dials into the ISP's modems) and PPP (the protocol used to connect to the ISP) support. They also have set-up programs which configure your connection

from only a few simple pieces of information.

Further information the main TCP/IP stacks is available on their respective websites:

Genesis - <http://www.active-net.co.uk>
 Miami - <http://www.nordicglobal.com>

A demo version of Miami limited to a one hour connection is available on most cover CDs.

Once You're Connected

Once you've got your connection to an ISP sorted out you'll then want to start actually using some Internet services. Take a look at the grey side columns in this feature to learn about the major services you can use and the software you'll need to access them. I would suggest you start by setting up a web browser (working demo's of all the common ones can be found on cover CDs) so you can visit the websites of the other programs and download them.

There is one other factor you might be concerned about once you're connected however...

Phone charges

Almost all ISPs provide you with a local call number (usually starting with 0845) which means wherever you call them from in the UK, the phone call is charged as a local rate call. The call is charged from when your modem connects to the ISP until you disconnect (it doesn't matter whether data is being transferred or not). Remember that internet programs can multitask so you can, for example, collect your EMail and browse the web at the same time, or download files while chatting on IRC. To minimise your costs it's a good idea to do several things at once, making maximum use of your time online and your Amiga's superior capabilities. Another cost-cutter is to use the 'off-line' facilities of programs like EMailers and newsreaders. This allows you to read and write messages while you're not connected, then download new ones and upload your replies in one hit when you next go on-line. Most web browsers have a cache feature which allows you to download complex pages with lots to read to your harddisk and then read them later when you're offline and not racking up the 'phone bill.

Usenet Continued...

On Usenet there are various conventions which you should follow to make everyone's life more pleasant. An excellent place to find out more about these is the news.announce.newusers news group where several introductory texts are posted regularly. The main piece of advice I would give is to read a newgroup for a few days before you start posting to it, that way you'll see what the group's really about (which isn't always clear from the name) and also what the regular posters are like.

IRC (Internet Relay Chat)

AmIRC - <http://www.vapor.com/> (pg 16)

Imagine a room full of people, all handing notes into someone in the centre, who gives each note either to the whole group to read at once, or to a specific person to read privately, and you have a basic understanding of IRC. It's not immediate (like ICQ), but it is fun and easily addictive. On each IRC server there are many channels each of which is dedicated to a particular topic, you'll often find a #amiga channel for example. You not only can chat to many people in many channels (all at the same time... limited only by the size of your monitor and how quickly you go crazy), but can also send (and receive) files as well.

IRC Tips

"Netiquette" is basically manners on the Internet, so here are a few rules...

1. Don't type whole words or sentences in capital letters unless you really need to, as it's SHOUTING.
2. Don't "flood" the channel, which means don't keep sending messages thick and fast like a tidal wave, as it means no-one else can get a word in.
3. Try not to swear.
4. Just treat people like you would like to be treated yourself.
5. Apart from that if you use Genesis make sure it has your name selected, and not the default 'root' before you go on a channel, as many won't let you on.

Be careful about the phone bill... it's very easy to not notice the hours go by, until BT send you a birthday card 'cos they love you so much. You'll get to know many commands and other things once you've hung out on IRC for a while... have fun!

FTP (File Transfer Protocol)

AmFTP - <http://www.vapor.com/> (pg 20)
 Directory Opus FTP Module -
<http://www.gpssoft.com.au/> (No Review)

FTP is a method of transferring files of all types between computers on a network. On the Internet it is a common way of making files available for download. FTP requires a server program to be running on the computer holding the files, and a client program on the computer that wants to receive them. Most modern FTP programs make using FTP as simple as a file manager. There are even clients which mount FTP sites as devices so you can browse them from the Workbench.

All FTP sites require you to log on with a username and pass word, however many support anonymous FTP which means anyone can log on to them and download files. On an anonymous FTP site simply use anonymous as the username and your EMail address as the password. Many FTP clients allow you to set these up in their preferences and use them for every anonymous FTP site. Private sites will supply you with a username and password so you can log in.

ICQ (I Seek You)

StrICQ - <http://owl.net/amiga/stricq/> (pg 27)

ICQ is a tool that lets you communicate easily with friends on the Internet. It works by connecting to a central server on which you register your name, EMail address and other details. If a friend runs ICQ they also register with the server. You can then search for their name or EMail address and add them to your ICQ contact list. When you're connected to the Internet the ICQ client will highlight any person in your contact list who is currently online. You can then contact them and communicate using a text chat window. It is also possible to send files and URLs and leave messages for users who are offline. ICQ isn't limited to only your Amiga friends and family... anyone with a PC or Mac can communicate with you as well, when you see each other online.

ICQ is fantastic for friends and families that are worlds apart (and alot cheaper than international phone calls too).

ISPs

FreeServe

At SEAL we probably wouldn't recommend FreeServe as a long-term ISP for an Amiga user as they don't provide Amiga support and tend to be a bit slow. However they do have a facility which allows you to setup your account online on your Amiga without needing an internet connection already. Once you have a FreeServe account you can visit the websites of various other ISPs (some are described in the right hand column) and find one that really suits your needs. Then use their online signup pages. So here is the procedure for setting up the two main TCP/IP stacks to connect to FreeServe:

Configuring Miami for FreeServe

1. Start Miamilnit in the Miami drawer.
2. Click Continue to start the configuration.
3. On the second page click Continue.
4. You can also accept the defaults on the next page unless you have a faster serial port expansion, click Continue.
5. Click Continue.
6. Now select your modem from the list (if it's not listed choose 'other' and follow the instructions) and change the bottom gadget from ATDP to ATDT, click Continue.
7. Enter the phone number 0845 0796699, click Continue.
8. On this page set Login name to "freeservesignup" and the Password to "signup" (both without quotes).
9. Leave all the other options at the defaults and click Continue.
10. Click on dial and if all goes well Miamilnit should get the information it needs and move to the next page.
11. On this page enter your real name in the Real name box and a user name (this can be anything you like but should be short, I use robert) in the Username box. If you don't have a printer connected and online uncheck the Print box. Now click Continue for the final time.
12. Load the main Miami program.
13. When it asks you if you want to import settings from Miamilnit click Import.
14. Choose Miamilnit.config in the requester.
15. Now change the following in Miami: On the PPP page switch off "Get DNS from IPCP". On the TCP/IP page switch off Verify DNS servers". On the Database page select "DNS servers" from the cycle gadget at the top and add two entries: 194.152.64.68
194.152.64.35
16. Choose Save from the Settings menu.
17. Now Click Online

Setup your account as detailed below.

18. Click Offline in Miami.
19. Go to the Dialer page and change the login ID to your FreeServe node name

(this is the part of your EMail address after the @ sign). Now change the password to the one you picked.

20. Choose Save from the Settings menu.
21. Now you're all done, clicking Online will now connect you to the Internet for real!

Configuring Netconnect 2 for FreeServe

1. Click Next to start the configuration.
2. Choose "Use Mmodem (analog/ISDN)..." then click Next.
3. Pick your modem from the popup list, leave the serial device settings at the defaults unless you have a fast serial expansion, click next.
4. Click Next to accept the defaults on the this page.
5. Now enter the following details: login name = "freeservesignup", password = "signup", phone number = "0845 079 6699" (all without quotes), click Next.
6. Click Next to accept this page.
7. Click dial and if all goes well the Wizard will dial your ISP and get the rest of the information it needs.
8. On this final page click Finish.
9. Now start Genesis itself (it's the Plug icon on the Netconnect dock or in the AmiTCP drawer inside the NetConnect2 drawer).
10. Click on the Connect button.

Setup your account as detailed below.

11. Click Disconnect in the Genesis window.
12. Choose Genesis from the Settings menu.
13. Go to the Interfaces page and edit the only Interface defined (assuming you've only just installed Netconnect).
14. In the Edit Interface window go to the Modem tab and change the Login to your FreeServe node name (this is the part of your EMail address after the @ sign). Then change the password to the one you picked.
15. Click on OK in the Edit window then Save in Genesis prefs.
16. Now you're all done, clicking on Connect in the small connection window will now connect you to the Internet for real!

Setting up a FreeServe Account

1. Load a web browser (we suggest the demo of Voyager).
2. In the Location gadget type "https://signup.freeserve.net", Return.
3. When the page loads click the Go button next to "Register for a new account".
4. Read through (:) the Acceptable Usage Policy then click accept at the bottom.
5. Enter your personal information, remember not to press Return until you've filled everything you want to in. **TIP:** Most of the fields can be left blank as long as you fill in your name and address information.
6. Choose an EMail address and a password then click continue.
7. You may have to try a few times to find a unique one as FreeServe has many subscribers, remember that only the part after the @ sign has to be unique.
8. When the confirmation page comes up just quit your browser, the options there aren't needed on the Amiga.

UKOnline

Tel: 0800 0534500
WWW: <http://www.ukonline.co.uk>
Monthly Fee: Free
Call Charges: Local
Amiga Support: Yes (25p/min)
Amiga Software: No
EMail addresses: 1 mail box
Web Space: Unlimited

UKOnline have recently dropped their fees and become a free ISP, they are one of the few free ISPs to offer Amiga support albeit on a premium rate phone number. Several SEAL members belong to UKOnline and have been impressed their quality of service. The unlimited webspace is also a bonus.

Free4All

Tel: 01303 775500
WWW: <http://www.free4all.co.uk>
Monthly Fee: Free
Call Charges: Local
Amiga Support: Yes (local rate)
Amiga Software: No
EMail addresses: Unlimited mail boxes
Web Space: 10Mb

Free4All are another free ISP with Amiga support and have excellent instructions for setting up both Miami and Genesis to use their service on their website. Their tech support is on a local rate number too.

WireNet

Tel: 01925 791716
WWW: <http://www.wirenet.u-net.com>
Monthly Fee: £14.25 or £115/year
Call Charges: Local
Amiga Support: Yes (standard rate)
Amiga Software: Yes (shareware)
EMail addresses: Unlimited, 1 mail box
Web Space: 25Mb

Wirenet is the Amiga only Internet service run by Neil Bothwick, former compiler of the CU Amiga CDROMs and contributor to both CU and AF. Wirenet provides an account with u-net one of the biggest ISPs in the country and a package of shareware software pre-configured to get you on-line. In our experience Wirenet provides a good quality of service and excellent technical support.

The following ISPs do not provide Amiga support but you can use them with your Amiga. They are included because they give you some free calls. Ironically depending on your Internet use they may even work out cheaper than a free ISP!

Cable and Wireless Connect 12, 35 and 70
Tel: 0800 0923001
WWW: <http://www.cwcom.co.uk>
Monthly Fee: £5.99, £14.99 or £29.99
Call Charges: 12, 35 or 70 hours/month free then discounted local rates
EMail addresses: 1 mail box
Web Space: 20Mb

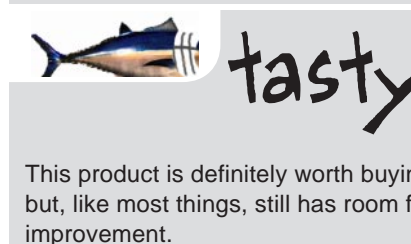
BT Internet

Tel: 0800 800001
WWW: <http://www.btinternet.com>
Yearly Fee: £129.25
Call Charges: Local (freecall at weekends)
EMail addresses: Unlimited
Web Space: Unlimited

Reviews

Reviews are very subjective, what one reviewer may love, another hates. Such is life. So we decided to have a general score, which the reader can take into account along with the text.

So we invented the fish...it's easy to work out which we feel is a better product... the more bones that show, the smellier the fish :). We also feel that in the % system too many products get "Gold" or similar awards, even if they have a fair bit of room for improvement. Thus we are only awarding Caviar to products that are practically perfect.



Miami

Installation of Miami is slightly more complicated than most shareware packages because it is distributed in several archives so you only have to download the parts you need. To successfully install you need the correct program archive for your processor and one of the GUI archives, both MUI and Gadtools (using the GLayout.library) GUIs are available. If you choose the MUI GUI you'll need to have MUI installed too of course. Once you've assembled everything you need installation is simply a case of running the installer.

A separate program called Miamilnit is provided to set-up the connection to your ISP. Miamilnit has a number of screens that ask you for details of your ISP and your modem. Each screen has extensive explanatory text in a scroll box at the top and a 'Back' button to allow you to go back and alter entries. Once you've entered all your data Miamilnit then dials your ISP and interrogates their servers for the rest of the information it needs. The configuration data is then saved and the most important information can be saved and/or printed in a human readable format in case you ever need to set-up the account again.

When you load the main Miami program after setting up your first ISP it asks you if you want to import the settings gathered by Miamilnit. With the settings loaded you can then connect to your ISP by clicking on the Connect button, most ISPs need no further configuration. One area of this process that is slightly confusing is that the file generated by Miamilnit is not a Miami configuration file, so when you have imported it you need to save it as the default settings in Miami to make the configuration permanent. Although Miami doesn't support multiple ISPs you can save as many configuration files as you like and load them at will. You can also make icons for the configuration files with Miami as the default tool to easily launch Miami for different ISPs.

Miami offers a wide range of configuration options allowing you to tailor it to your needs and set-up your Internet system around it. You can configure programs to run when Miami loads, quits

Robert Williams reviews this easy to use TCP/IP stack.

and when it goes on and off-line, this means loading Miami can start your entire Internet system. For example I have Miami set-up so it tries to dialup my ISP as soon as I load it, then when it connects and goes on-line my EMail is automatically collected and StrICQ is run. Finally Miami iconifies itself onto the Workbench out of my way.

In this review I've mainly concentrated on Miami's Internet features however it works equally well connecting to a local network using any hardware with SANA2 (Standard Amiga Networking Architecture) drivers and even has its own faster native MNI drivers for many Ethernet boards.

Compared to Genesis, Miami is considerably less powerful, it can only run one interface at a time so you can't connect to a local network and the Internet simultaneously and it also lacks Genesis' user security and usage monitoring features. However Miami is explicitly designed to get people connected to the Internet in the simplest way possible and it does this extremely well. Costing features are very useful to the average surfer and fortunately an external package is available on Aminet which reads Miami's log files and tells you how much time and money you've spent online. For those who need more features Miami Deluxe which has everything you need to run your own local network with Internet access is in-development and is now in final public beta testing.

Miami will get you connected to the Internet with minimum fuss, in the two years I've been using it Miami has been 100% reliable and has never caused me any problems, highly recommended.

Results



NetConnect 2

Robert Williams reviews this comprehensive Internet package with the help of Michael Hunt, Jeff Martin and Gary Storm.

If you want to access the wide range of services the Internet can offer then you need a wide selection of software. Netconnect is a package of Amiga Internet software, bundled with an installation routine and various utilities to make it all work together as a combined package.

Installation

Installation, which uses the standard Amiga Installer, is mostly completely automatic and asks you only a couple of questions. If you already have any of the Netconnect programs installed individually it allows you to copy over your old data so you don't lose any information such as EMail messages, addresses, bookmarks and ISP settings. All the programs in the Netconnect suite require the MUI GUI system, which the installer will install for you if you don't already have it. MUI is shareware and the copy on the Netconnect CD is unregistered but you can use it for as long as you like without registering as long as you don't mind missing some of the configuration features. Once the installer has copied over all the files it then gives you the option to register yourself by entering your details, you can then choose to transmit this information to Active electronically or send in the registration card. From your details and the serial number provided a unique keyfile is created which unlocks the Netconnect programs.

Wiz Bang!

The final step of the installation is to actually setup your Internet connection, for this the installer runs the Genesis Wizard which configures the Genesis TCP/IP stack to connect to your Internet Service Provider. The Wizard consists of a number of pages where you enter all the required information. You can move through the pages with Next and Back buttons so it's easy to correct something if you make a mistake. Each page has plenty of explanatory text and all the in-

formation needed should be given to you by your Provider when you open your account or in the case of many free ISPs is easily available. The Wizard includes a long list of pre-configured modem settings from which you can choose, if your modem isn't listed then you can enter the correct initialisation string (a generic string is provided which should get you on-line). Once you've filled in the basic information it needs the Wizard then connects and gathers the rest of the configuration data from the ISP's network. All ISPs are different but here at SEAL we've set Netconnect up on several different ones and the Wizard has worked every time (make sure you are using the latest version of Netconnect though as we did have problems with the original 2.0 version). When that is done the Wizard will save the configuration and if you wish print a copy of the settings it found for future reference. Now you are ready to go on-line for the first time!

Netconnect Dock

The Netconnect program itself is a small program launching utility which allows you to control all the programs in the package from a central point and gives you access to some of the configuration options. It comes setup with a twelve button window which you can place anywhere on the Workbench screen allowing you to quickly go on-line, run any of

the programs or read the documentation. Although this seems to be a simple button bar dedicated to connect if you open its preferences window from the menu you find it's actually a powerful little utility. You can add your own buttons to the Netconnect dock (the menu used for the buttons) and remove or re-assign the existing ones if you wish. You can create as many dock windows as you like and you could use it as a launcher for all your programs. Each dock can have a key to pop it up or hide it. The dock can be turned off so the buttons which can be displayed as text, icons or both together. There is also the option to add items to the Workbench Tools menu. Each button or menu item can run Workbench programs, CLI (shell) commands, Shell scripts and AREXX scripts.

Connecting

Clicking on the Genesis button in the dock opens the connection window ready to put you on-line, if you have several ISPs you can set them all up in Genesis and quickly choose between them in the connection window, if you have several users you can choose who you want to be here too, you'll be prompted for a password if security is setup (more on that later). When you click connect Genesis will dial up your ISP and establish a connection, the connection window has a status list which shows when you go on and off line and why, and there is also a useful on-line timer. Even better than this is the built in cost calculator which calculates the cost of your on-line time based on the phone rates you set in Genesis preferences. This will even draw a graph of how much you've spent on calls over the year and shows each user as a separate line!

Product Information

Distributor: Active Technologies
Tel: +44 (0) 1325 460116
WWW: www.active-net.co.uk
Address: Oval House
 113 Victoria Road
 Darlington
 DL1 5JH
 ENGLAND
Price: £49.95

Pack Contents

Here are all the full programs you get with NetConnect, for more information on what each type of program does see our main Get Netted! feature.

Genesis

The TCP/IP stack that connects you to your Internet Service Provider.

Voyager

World Wide Web Browser

Microdot II

Email and News reader.

AmFTP

File Transfer Protocol client with Aminet mode (full review on pg 20)

AmIRC

Internet Relay Chat client

AmTelnet

Allows you to connect to remote computers, somewhat similar to bulletin board systems but over the Internet

AmTalk

Chat (text) directly with other AmTalk users across the Internet

NetInfo

One utility which combines several Internet fault finding tools

AmTerm

Connect to real Bulletin Boards and other services directly over phone lines (not Internet)

XArc

Explore, extract and create lha, lzx and zip archives

Contact Manager

Keep all your EMail, Web, FTP and IRC addresses in one place

About This Review

As this issue of Clubbed concentrates on the Internet it was obvious we had to have a review of NetConnect. Unfortunately none of the NetConnect users in SEAL felt able to write it. Even though I don't use NetConnect myself I have installed it for other SEAL members and own some of the included applications. I researched the review by using NC at Mike's place and once it was finished I got opinions from Mike, Gary and Jeff who all use the package. I hope this means this review is fair and balanced.

What Next

So now we're on-line with Genesis (easy wasn't it) what can we do? Well Netconnect comes supplied with so many programs that almost every Internet service is catered for, let's explore the programs one by one and see what we can get up to:

Voyager

I'll start with Voyager which is the web browser supplied with the Netconnect package. Voyager does a good job of displaying web pages and supports frames allowing access to most sites, however it doesn't currently support JavaScript which is becoming a requirement on more and more sites. Table layout seems rather slower than IBrowse with some (admittedly quite large) pages taking a long time even on an '060, and subjectively image decoding also seems slow.

SSL support is provided for secure on-line transactions and I believe Voyager is the only Amiga browser to support SSL. Certificates which confirm that the server you are sending your details to is genuine. It also has a wide range of other security options so you can browse sending the minimum information about yourself to the sites you visit.

Printing in Voyager is pretty comprehensive, you can choose between full graphics, graphics without backgrounds (useful for those black backgrounds) and plain text. It definitely has the advantage over IBrowse here which can only print text at the moment. In text mode Voyager makes an effort to mimic the page by passing style (bold, italic and underline) and size information to the printer, unfortunately it doesn't seem to re-wrap the text very well for printing so if the page has long lines in the source you get a ragged printout. Graphics printing is very good even though it is at screen resolution so it looks a bit blocky. The only exception to

this is for pages with a dark background and light coloured text, if you switch the background off to avoid wasting ink Voyager will still print the text in the original colour which is often too light to read.

Other useful features include: A 'find' button which searches four of the most popular search engines for the keyword you enter. Help bubbles that tell you how recently you visited a link. A cache indicator icon that tells you when you're looking at a cached page. Also built in spoofing allowing you to access pages that are setup for Netscape only.

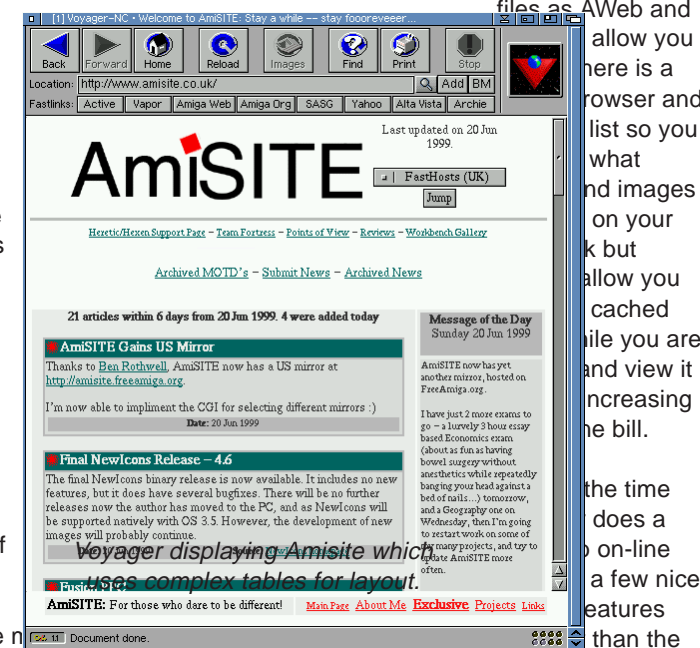
Voyager does have a couple of features that seem rather poorly implemented... it has a Network Status window that allows you to see what files are downloading but you cannot stop individual files as AmWeb and allow you to see here is a browser and list so you what and images on your k but allow you cached while you are and view it increasing the bill.

the time does a on-line a few nice features than the opposition and miss some very useful functions... Roll on version 3!

Microdot II

Both EMail and Usenet News are handled by MicroDot II which is discussed by Thomas Hurst in His EMailer roundup on page 24.

When used as part of the Netconnect package Microdot is very well integrated having direct links to Contact Manager and Voyager. If a mail item has a URL in it you can click in the link and this will open up Voyager and take you to the page. As mentioned elsewhere you can also use Contact Manager to store all your EMail addresses and URLs for use, at a later date, by other programs such



as the afore mentioned Voyager.

As a stand alone program Microdot is comparable to other Amiga mailers/newsreaders but when used as part of the Netconnect package it really comes in to its own. Each family member can have their own account set up so that only one copy of Microdot is needed but each member has their account protected by a password. This also extends to Contact Manager which is also password protected.

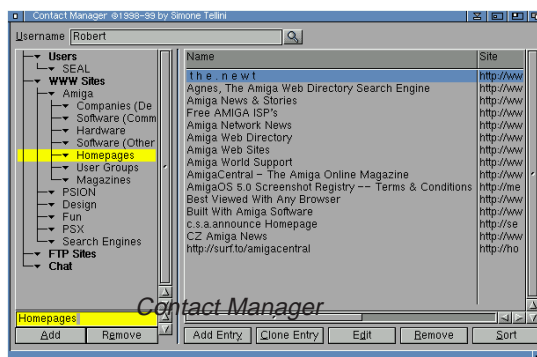
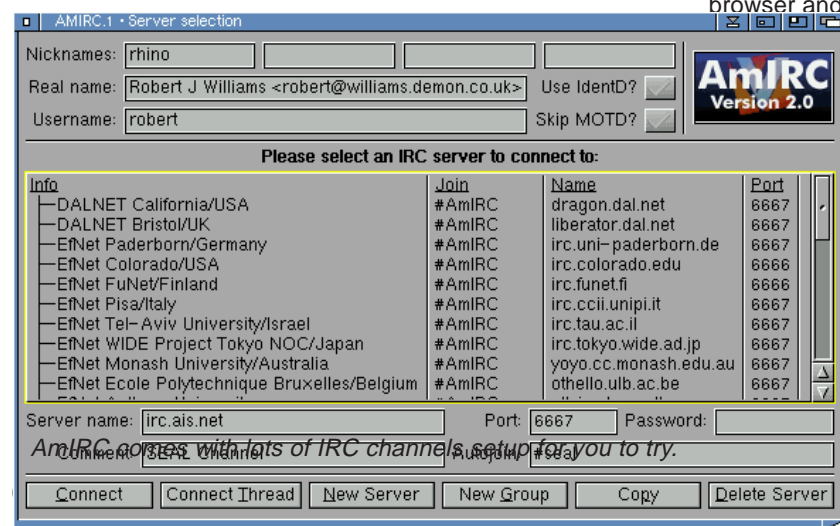
AmFTP This FTP client is generally regarded as one of the best on the Amiga and will let you access the many FTP sites across the world including the famous Aminet sites of Amiga shareware, it even has an excellent Aminet Download Tool built in for even easier use of these great resources. See my full review on page 20 for more details.

AmIRC

AmIRC is another very highly rated client and you can easily find people who will call it the best IRC client on any platform, you can even find PC users who say it's the best there is.

When you load AmIRC the first window you see allows you to pick an IRC server to log-in to and a channel to join. Several servers and channels are setup for you and it's easy to add additional ones, you can also split the list into groups.

AmIRC's user interface is very flexible and allows you to open as many channel windows as you like (and your brain can cope with!). There are also many other windows you can open so along with the channels you could have several private chats going on along with file transfers too!



Each channel window has a button bank which you can customise so your most used IRC commands are just a click away, you can also attach commands to the function keys. AmIRC allows you to assign sounds and or AREXX scripts to various events too.

A powerful plug-in interface and AREXX port all this already comprehensive program to be extended further and many plug-in modules and scripts can be found on the 'net. As with other Netconnect modules integration with other parts of the package is good, you can grab URLs from the chat window and send them to voyager, also channels can be stored in Contact Manager.

Contact Manager

Contact Manager allows you to organise your browser hot lists, EMail address book, favourite FTP sites and IRC servers all in one utility which you can then access from each application. For each type of entry you can organise the items into sections and sub sections so for example you could have a group for Amiga websites and a sub group for the software related ones. In Contact Manager you can right click on an item to get a context menu allowing you to send data from that item to one of your Internet programs this allows you to not only send someone's EMail address from their entry to an EMailer but also send the URL of their website to the

browser and so on.

you have program, etc. port most user Mail k so ve to in ct also pro-the

Connect Bundle and I have noticed al now have direct support for it. If doesn't then there is the option to REXX to achieve integration.

XArc

Utility is supplied to help you deal the various types of archive (an re is a file containing many files ly compressed to save download time) you will find on the Internet. XArc can handle lha (most common on the Amiga), lzx and zip (favoured on the PC) archives and has a modular system so more types could be easily added. If you have an archive (one you've downloaded, found on a CD, made yourself, whatever) XArc can show you the contents without de-crunching it. You can view individual files and setup viewers for different filetypes in the preferences. Programs that have an Installer script can even be installed from within XArc without de-crunching the archive! You can also use XArc to build your own archives (for upload to Aminet perhaps) and it makes arranging your archive much easier than using the separate archiver programs which are all shell based. One hidden gem in the user interface is the mysteriously named Palette window which allows you to drag files from the archive to your hard disk and vice versa.

The way XArc comes setup with Netconnect by default can be rather annoying if you like to download several archives and look at them later. It's set so every time you download an archive it is saved as a temporary file and loaded into XArc for de-crunching. From this point there's no way to save the archive with its original name so you have to spend on-line time de-crunching it to somewhere useful. See our tips box out for how to disable this action if you don't like it. That said for working with archives XArc does a fine job.

MIME Preferences

This program provides a central point where you can configure how most of the Netconnect programs deal with the files they download. Many filetypes come setup as standard and you can easily setup your own. Filetype recognition is based on the file extension, for each filetype you can choose to have it saved directly to disk, viewed with any application that can have the filename passed as a shell argument (most

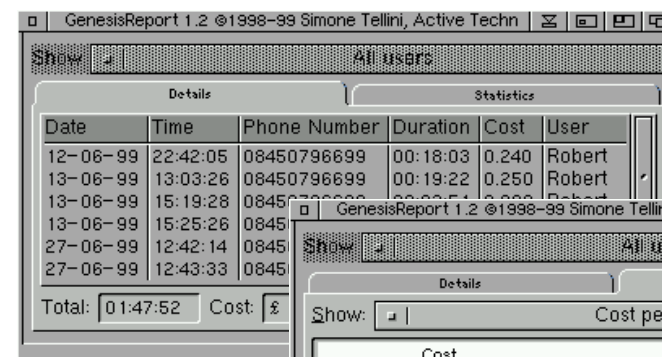
viewer programs) or have a requester pop-up to ask you what you want to do with the file. MIME prefs allows you to use your choice of viewers that best suits your system and way of working. As most Internet applications tend to have these options it's a really good idea to centralise them like this.

Genesis

Genesis is an evolution of AmiTCP which was a Unix style package full of scary text configuration files and cryptic documentation. Thankfully all that's been replaced with a comprehensive MUI preferences program which is quite easy to use although there are lots of options. I'm not going to go into detail here as we're mainly reviewing Netconnect as a way to get on to the Internet however Genesis has powerful features like multiple interfaces which will allow you to run your Amiga on a network (ethernet for example) and connect to your ISP at the same time. However all most users will need to do is run the Wizard and click Connect!

Family Values

One big benefit of using Genesis over Miami is that it offers a multi-user environment (as much as is possible on the Amiga) and you can control and monitor the access of different users. This can be useful for individuals as it allows you to keep an eye on the amount of time (and therefore money) you're spending on the 'net. If you've got a family who all want 'net access it must be a real boon. You can create an identity for each user and set a password so they have to access the 'net using their settings. The password system gives users privacy by allowing only them to access their EMail in Microdot and hot-lists in Contact Manager. You can set times when each user may access the 'net and the maximum duration of each session. To prevent fiddling with the clock to overcome time limits Genesis can get the time from an Internet time server of your choice. Now obviously this isn't going to stop the little darlings downloading and installing Miami :) but it'll be useful for the less Amiga aware. Once the users are configured you can use the Genesis report tool to see how much time each user has been on-line and if you configure the telephone charges in Genesis preferences it can tell you how much their calls have cost.



Docs

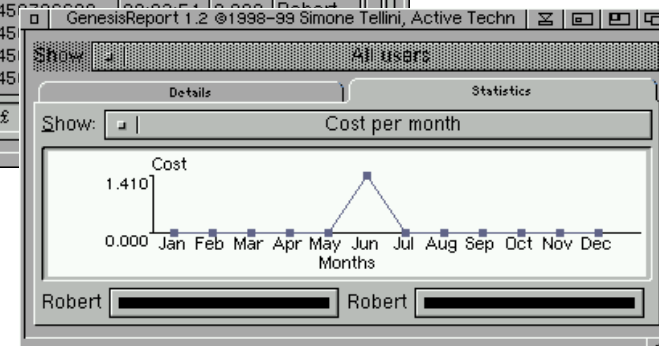
Excellent documentation is provided in the form of HTML pages which can be viewed in Voyager. Each program is described in depth with plenty of screen shots. Although there are no tutorials as such everything is sufficiently well described for even new users, and there are sections on the basic Internet concepts relating to the different programs. I did find that some of the documents were slightly out of date, relating to older versions with some new features not mentioned, but nothing too major. The only printed documentation is a short booklet in the CD cover which explains the installation so you can get access to the disk based documentation.

Bad Points

Contact Manager and the MIME Preferences program help integrate the Netconnect package to a large degree and I'm glad they have kept the individual programs rather than opting for a PC style behemoth combining many different functions. However there are still many configuration options common between the programs which you have to enter separately in each one. To get set up you have to go into the preferences of each application and configure them individually which involves typing in things like your EMail address and server details several times. This also means that these details don't change when you select a different users. I think it would be a good idea to have a separate preferences program for this that all the applications use, this could then have a Wizard to help new users out by explaining technical details like mail and SMTP servers too.

As with any package containing a large number of separate programs it's unlikely that every aspect of Netconnect is going to be ideal for you, however un-

Genesis Report shows you how long you've been on-line and how much it cost!



less you decided you really didn't like all the major programs NC offers such good value for money it would still be worth getting. For example just buying IBrowse or AWeb and Miami comes to more than the cost of the Netconnect 2 package.

Conclusion

I would rate all the programs in NetConnect as at least good with many of them being arguably the very best available on the Amiga. The flexibility of Genesis itself is great and the multi-user, multi-ISP and costing features surpass Miami (which I love and use myself), I was really impressed. Although there are areas which new users will find tricky mostly this is the nature of Internet software. At this price Netconnect is very hard to beat, I'd recommend it to anyone who wants to get on the Internet.

Results

Pros

Most packages included outstanding
Excellent Value
Good integration

Cons

Software may not be your 1st choice
Some setup integration could be improved



AmFTP

Product Information

Developer: Mathias Mischler
Distributor: Vaporware
WWW: www.vapor.com
Price: £18, shareware

AmFTP does the none too glamorous job of transferring files from one computer to another using FTP (File Transfer Protocol) however it does it so exceptionally well that you may soon find it an essential part of your Internet tool kit. Before you can connect to an FTP site you must set up a server profile which contains the address of the site, any login information required and the default directory both on the server and on your harddisk for uploads and downloads. Once you've entered this information AmFTP will remember it so you don't have to enter it every time you want to go to a site. You can also set it to remember the last directory you visited on the server and the last directory you used on your hard disk and go straight back there next time.

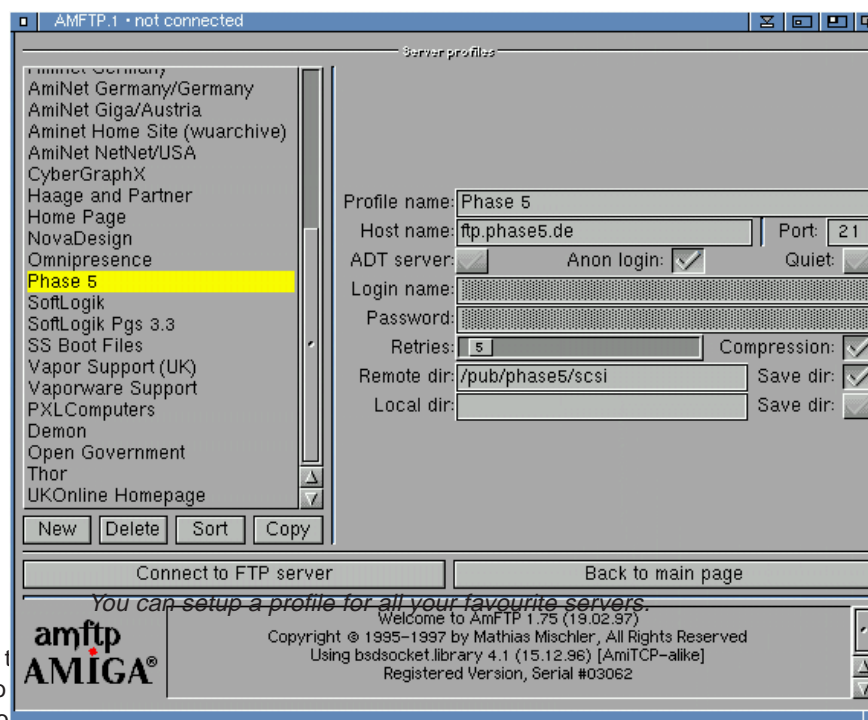
When you connect to an FTP site AmFTP can show you the files on the remote server in two ways, Directory Tool mode is similar to a filemanager like Opus 4 with one file list for the download directory on your hard disk and one for the current directory on the server. You can then choose files on either side and copy them to the other (upload from you hard disk to the FTP server or download from the server to disk). You can also delete and rename files and even view them directly using a user configurable

viewer. This option means you can read readme files on the server within AmFTP before downloading a file.

If you're using AmFTP to manage your website there are a couple of limitations which could be improved, firstly you cannot transfer directories so you have to manually make the directory on the server across into it. Also date check files so you can check a whole load of files and ask that only the updated (and therefore more recent) files be copied. If both these features were added updating a website would just involve uploading the root directory, any required directories would be created and only the newer files transferred.

The jewel in AmFTP's crown is the brilliant ADT feature, ADT stands for Aminet Download Tool and is unique to Aminet servers. If you set a server for ADT mode AmFTP retrieves a list of the files uploaded in the last seven days or since you last looked. If you use Aminet regularly this just shows you what's new. You can sort the list by date, name or

Aminet and other FTP sites are essential for Amiga users. Robert Williams reviews AmFTP which makes using them much easier.



AmFTP is a great, easy to use FTP program especially if you're an Aminet fan and what Internetted Amigan isn't!

Results

Pros

Easy to use
 Brilliant ADT mode

Cons

Not ideal for complex websites



Both Vaporware and Ultima Thule Software have secure on-line ordering from their websites so you can register their software quickly and safely using your credit card.

WebVision

Gary Storm finds the ideal tool to view webcams in comfort.

Product Information

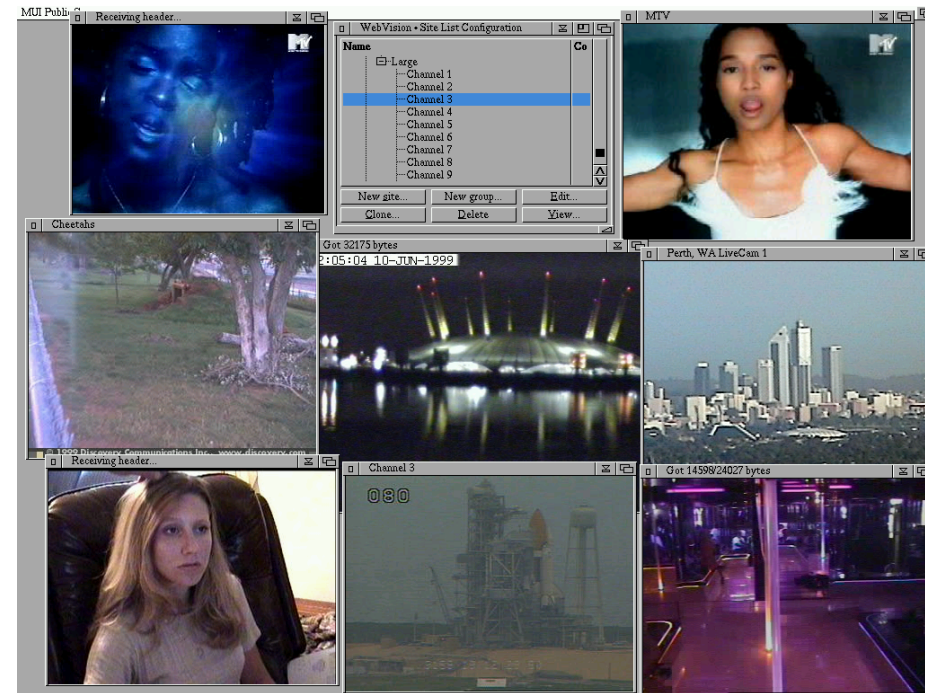
Developer: Troels Walsted Hansen
Distributor: Ultima Thule Software
WWW: www.thule.no
Price: \$25 (£16), shareware

Webvision ...does what it says on the tin.

Programmed by Troels Wanstead, and previously known as WebTV (until the PC WebTV people objected), this allows you to view web-cams from anywhere in the world (as long as they're connected to the 'net, of course). Web-sites that have web-camera's are diverse, but they all have either (most commonly) a digital camera taking a picture every 30 seconds or so, or a video camera sending streaming video. You could already view these sites with (most) normal web-browsers, but not as conveniently, quickly, or with as many cams on-screen at a time.

There are multitudes of web-cameras to look at, with many diverse subjects, including wildlife, sex (another form of wildlife I suppose), landmarks, tourist icons, shows, and just normal people reaching out to touch you (in a metaphorical sense, of course).

On starting the program (you have the choice of having it appear on it's own screen, or the workbench I prefer a dedicated screen), you're invited to choose from the plethora of categories and the sites listed in the sub-directories. There are cameras



Vision Overload!

everywhere, it seems (even in a toilet (!?!)).

One of the best things about WebVision, is that it's the registered users who make the site-list what it is. You can download the current site-list at any time through WebVision (it will save your old site-list for you), and upload any new web-cam sites that you discover. For instance, I uploaded a few sites I had discovered (A couple of Perth cams, and a few African wildlife cams), and two days later, when I downloaded the updated list, my discoveries were included. You can also download the latest

I can't really fault WebVision at all. Troels has done an excellent job of making web-cams even more of a pleasure to view, and there are plenty of interesting sites out there, and a few web-cam directory websites too.

A Voyeur's legal paradise.

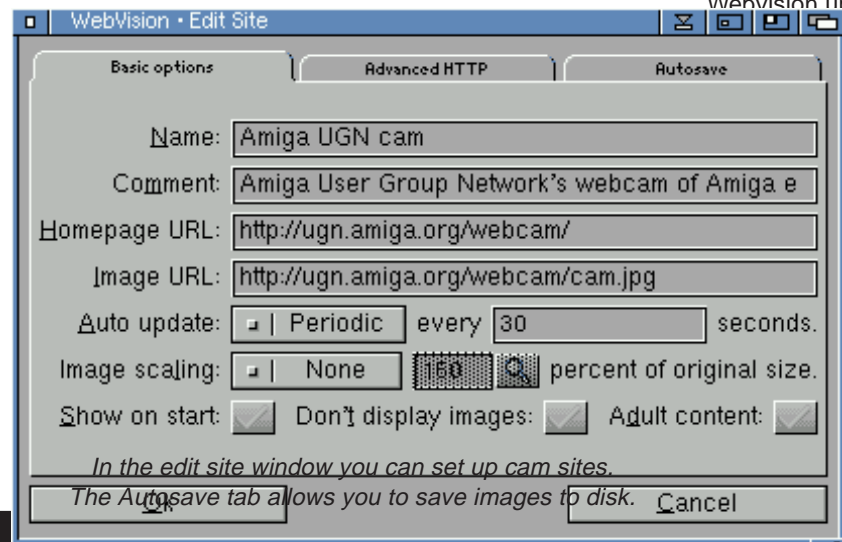
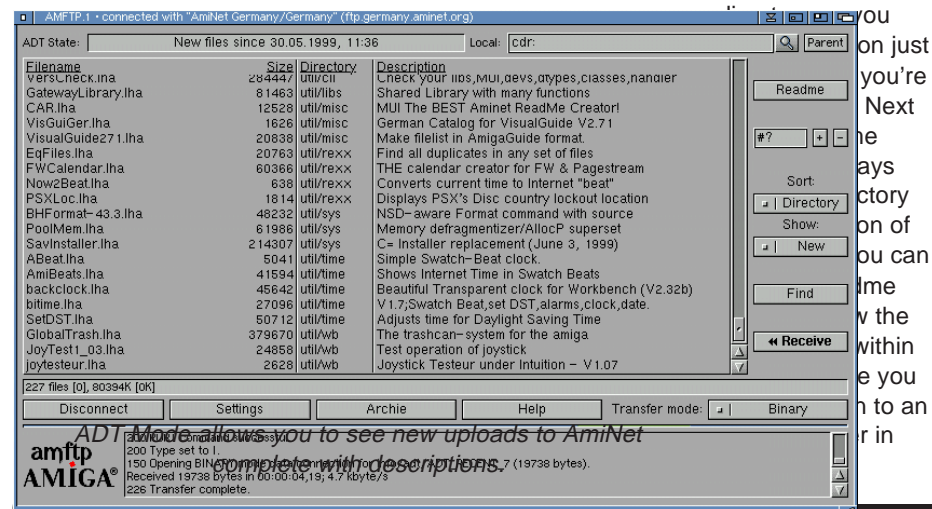
Results

Pros

Automatically updated sites list including other user's discoveries.

Non-blocking windowed interface.

Save frames to file option.



IBrowse 1.22

Robert Williams
explores the web with
IBrowse, one of the Big
3 Amiga browsers.

A few years ago when I first got connected to the Internet the Amiga only had one graphical web browser, AMosaic which was a port from Unix. The port was buggy, difficult to set up and very limited in the HTML it supported. However the coder of that port didn't give up and started work on a brand new browser, IBrowse. Seven public releases later here we are with version 1.22.

Main Features

Browsing most websites with IBrowse is a very painless experience as the program supports the most important HTML tags, the only real problems I have found are with tables on some sites. Even on sites with these problems the content is still viewable but the layout is slightly incorrect. In the soon to be released version 2 the table parser has been re-written hopefully overcoming these flaws. IBrowse supports frames but currently not JavaScript (or Java).

The speed of HTML display is generally very good the main limitations being large tables which take a long time to render and graphics decoding if you have a slower processor or all images decode instantly on but there is noticeable lag on O30 machines). I think the graphics speed is pretty much par for the course however table handling does seem slower than it could be. Even on the 060 very large tables like those on Eyetech's product pages can take a very noticeable time (about 10 seconds) to appear and during this time the browser is apparently hung. One of the features of the

recently announced version 2 is a re-written table parser which will be up to ten times faster so there are obviously large improvements to be made.

Support for all the common web image formats is provided by built in decoders, this includes GIF, JPEG and PNG, you can choose to use datatypes for any of the formats if you prefer or even disable images altogether for faster browsing. Progressive JPEGs and GIF animations are fully supported, in the case of GIF anims you can choose to let them run all the time, only if their window is active or switch them off completely. If you have a graphics card IBrowse supports CyberGraphX so images can be shown in all their 24bit glory on a suitable

the pointer over a particular item on the page. If you click with the pointer over a blank area of page the Page context menu allows actions such as saving the background image or viewing and saving the page source. If the page is in a frame the page menu allows you to view the frame in the full window (useful if a site traps you in its frames even if you link to a new site) and reload the individual frame too. The Image context menu allows you to save images on the page to disk or reload them. The link context menu allows you to open the link in the current or a new window, download the linked file directly to disk, or add the link directly to your hotlist. Another useful option in this menu is to copy the link's URL to the clipboard so you can paste it straight into

even another web



IBrowse displaying the Amiga website, note the customised gadget positions and images.

you want open on start-up and snapshot them using MUI functions. Take a look at the screen shots scattered around this issue to see some different IBrowse setups.

As you browse different websites IBrowse keeps copies of all the pages and images in a user definable on disk cache, this means if you return to a site you've recently visited IBrowse can

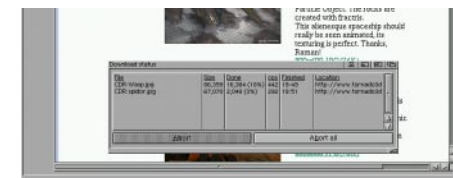
quickly retrieve the page and images from disk rather than having to load them over the slower Internet link. You can choose how big the cache should be and configure the program to check if the site has been updated before using the cached version. A useful indicator in the status bar tells you if you're viewing a cached page so you can immediately tell if you've seen it before. Probably the best aspect of the cache is that it allows you to view sites you've visited off-line, if you're interested in a site with a lot of content you can visit all the pages you're interested in then go off line and read them later, the links to pages still in the cache continue to work. The cache browser window allows you to look through all the pages in the cache, when you find what you want double clicking on the item loads it into the browser window.

IBrowse provides several ways of quickly accessing your favourite websites. Quickest is probably the bank of Fastlink buttons which can be shown in each browser window, clicking on a button takes you straight to the website you configure in the General Preferences window. Once you've been on the Internet for a while you're sure to have a wide range of websites which you want to keep handy but a button for every one would soon take up too much screen space and become disorganised. As with most browsers IBrowse provides a hotlist to help you organise your favourite sites. The hotlist manager can be accessed from a button in each browser window or a menu item. The hotlist is a hierarchical list so you can sort your links into sections and subsections, for example I have an Amiga section in my hotlist and inside this I have separate sections for software, hardware and magazine related links.

Adding a site to the hotlist is as simple as clicking on the Add button in the browser window while you're viewing the site, you can also enter links manually

or drag hotlinks from a browser window straight into the hotlist. You can then arrange the hotlist using drag and drop. Once an item is in the hotlist double clicking on it will start IBrowse loading the page, you can drag and drop links from the hotlist into browser windows too. If you use IBrowse with NetConnect it also has support for Vaporware's Contact Manager.

SSL support for secure Internet transactions (such as sending your credit card details to an Internet based supplier) is implemented in two ways, users with Miami as their TCP/IP stack can use its built in SSL support which is available for both European and US based users, IBrowse also has its own built in SSL support but this can only be used outside the US.



The download window shows you all the files you're currently downloading and allows you to Abort them individually.

Nice Touches

Drag and Drop of URLs is implemented all over IBrowse, basically anywhere you see a URL you can drag it to anywhere that needs a URL. A couple of examples include dragging a URL straight off a page into the Fastlinks preferences section and dragging a URL from one page into another browser window to view it there.

Although very similar to a feature first seen on AWeb the Network Status window is an extremely useful addition to IBrowse, this window lists all the files that are being downloaded at any one time with a display showing the number of bytes downloaded and the size of the file. If you see a file downloading you don't really need you can select it and stop it downloading while the rest of the information carries on, it's a selective stop button.

Right clicking on the back button brings up a context menu which allows you to instantly jump back through the links you followed to get to the current page, there is also a History window which shows you all the pages you've visited in this session. Finally the Global History window shows all the sites that have

been visited in a user definable time.

When you download files in IBrowse a window opens a list showing the progress of the download and the rate in characters per second. Rather than opening a window for each file you download the program simply adds downloads to this list as you start them. You can choose to abort an individual download at any time or abort them all. If you accidentally shut all the browser windows while downloading the download window stays open preventing you accidentally cancelling a large download.

One feature of IBrowse that HTML authors will love is the View Source window (what's so good about that, every browser has one I hear you cry :)) this not only lets you take a look at the code of the page you're viewing but also lets you edit the page on the fly (told you you'd like it) so if you come across a site with a silly mistake which means you can't view it you can simply edit the HTML and go on your way.

Conclusion

While IBrowse does have a few limitations in its HTML display abilities it copes with the vast majority of sites very well. Currently the lack of JavaScript is becoming more and more of a limitation but hopefully this will soon be solved. Where IBrowse excels is its ease of use combined with wide ranging configuration options and fast operation which for me makes it my browser of choice.

Results

Pros

Fast, good quality rendering of most websites.
Very flexible interface and config.
Many useful extra features.

Cons

Minor problems with some tables.
No JavaScript yet.



Product Information

Developer: Omnipresence Intl.
Distributor: HiSoft
Tel: (0500) 223660
WWW: www.hisoft.co.uk
www.omnipresence.com
Address: The Old School
Greenfield
Bedford, MK45 5DE
Price: £29.95

E-Mailer Roundup

MicroDot-II

Current Version: 1.16

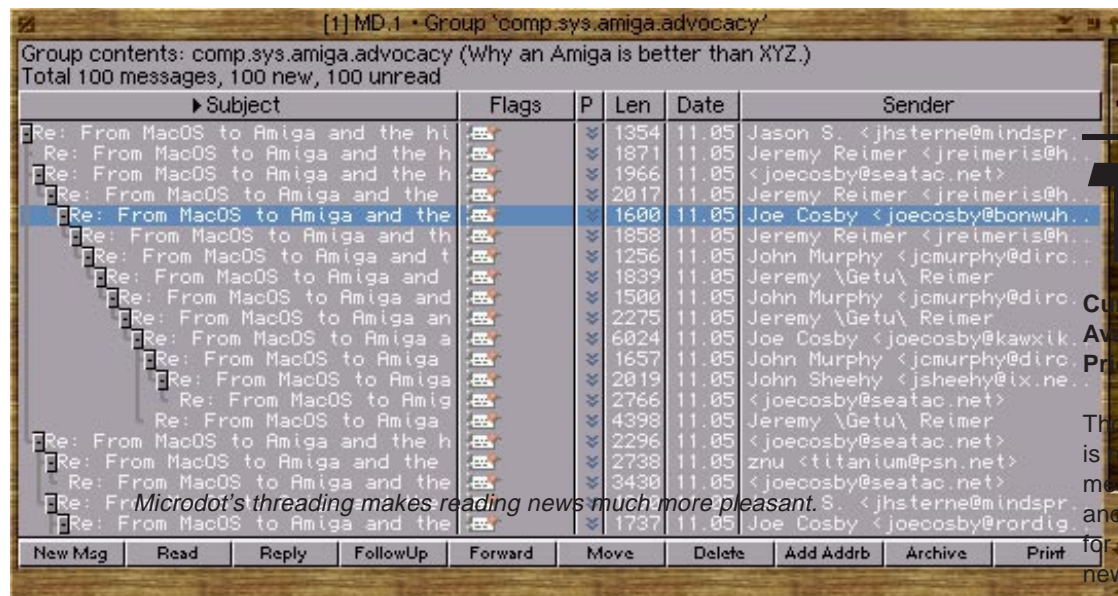
Available from: <http://www.vapor.com/>

Price: £20, shareware

Similar to Thor, MicroDot-II (MD-II) can do both email and news transparently. Unlike Thor, however, MD-II does not attempt to take this any further, so if you're after a complete messaging system for use with FidoNet, BBS's, and the Internet, it might not be the best choice.

MD-II is a very simple to set up client - similar to Yam, only with fewer immediate options. This makes MD-II a very good choice for an inexperienced user, because they aren't flooded with options, and yet more experienced users benefit from having quick access to things such as it's powerful filtering system without having to fight their way through millions of other options as with the likes of Yam.

One of MD-II's most distinguishing features is it's excellent threading - you see replies to messages linked to it in a



follow conversations. Thor gets close to this in it's "Grouped" mode, but doesn't provide the same sort of graphical overview of a thread. The less said about Yam in this respect the better...

MD-II has a decent message database format, which makes it excellent for "I never delete mail" types, as this lets it keep the speed up even when you have thousands of mails in a folder. Unfortunately this is based on storing

fragmentation over time.

Overall, MD-II is an excellent emailer and newsreader - very stable, responsive and easy to use, but it does seem to be limited in a number of areas, and includes certain mis-features which can cripple it in certain situations (such as the ability to show who each mail is from as it is downloading, which increases download times by 1/3rd...).

excellent choice for the average user who wants to filter mail from several mailing lists, or certain important people. Yam also has a relatively powerful ARexx interface, however, it has yet to compare with Thor's in either flexibility, or in the number of scripts which actually make use of it.

Yam is not without its downfalls. It stores emails as individual files, causing a lot of disk fragmentation and restricting performance - this is especially obvious on searches, which can take over 10 times as long as Thor. Also, being only a preview, Yam has a tendency to crash rather a lot on many systems, and although it's often rock solid, affected systems can expect to be rebooting and revalidating a lot...

Overall Yam is a nice emailer, and is

Thomas Hurst takes a look at three of the most popular Amiga EMail programs and finds there's something to suit everyone.

Thor

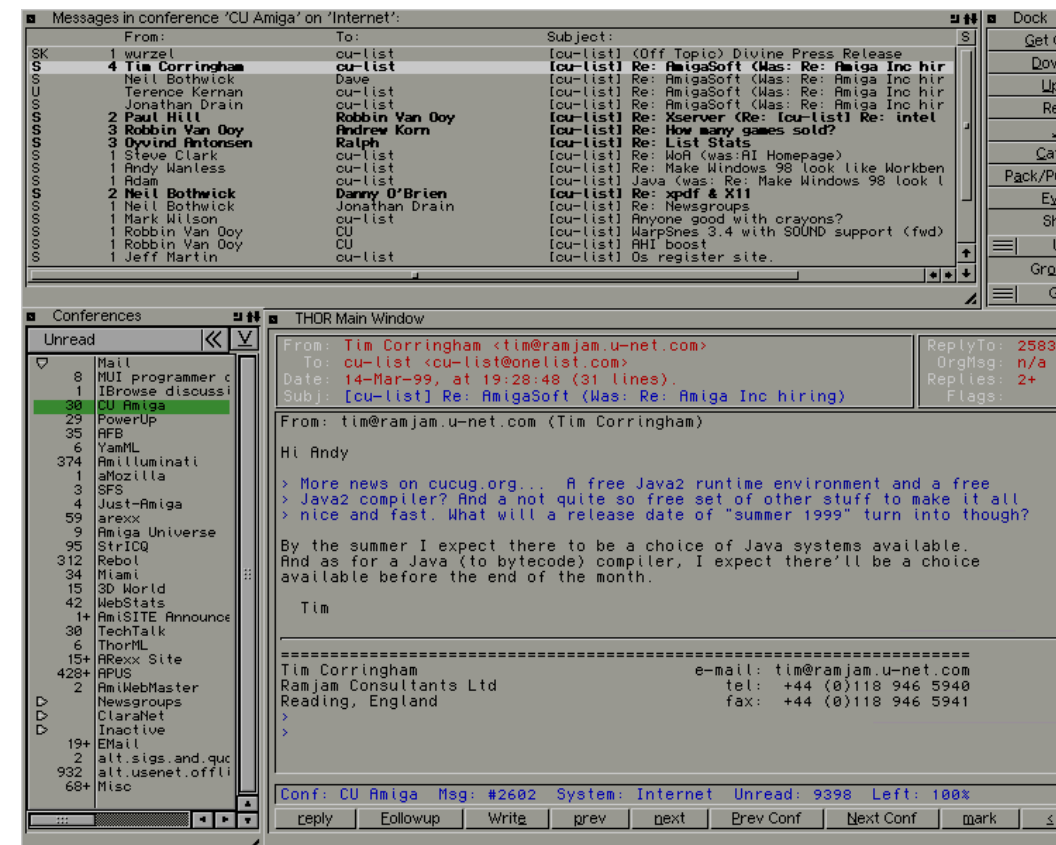
Current Version: 2.6

Available from: <http://www.thule.no/>

Price: £21, shareware

Thor differs from Yam and MD-II in that it is not just an emailer, but a complete messaging system, for use with news and numerous BBS systems. However, for most people, its TCP (email and news) abilities will be all that matters.

The thing that hits you most when you first install Thor is the GUI. Some people would describe it as "ugly", but I prefer the name "functional". In it's current incarnation (2.6) it uses a mixture of Class Act and it's own GUI system, neither renowned for their looks, but are renowned for their memory efficiency and speed. After a user poll, future versions will now use MUI, unfortunately the timeline for this actually happening is likely to be rather long...



Thor simply flags a message as deleted, and hides it from you. Instead of storing messages to be sent in an "Outgoing" folder, Thor uses Events, which as well as being used to send mails and post news articles, can also upload and download files, join and retire newsgroups, and cancel messages.

In keeping with most messaging systems, Thor has lots of facilities

flying. Each folder, or Conferences, as Thor calls them, can have a custom expiration range (i.e. a set number of days old, or a set number of messages in each conference, beyond which messages are deleted), it has excellent threading abilities, and an extremely extensive ARexx port for automation.

Overall, Thor is a very industrial strength mailer - probably the best if you expect to deal with a lot of mail, or you want to

perform many of the most important tasks. However, it is complex, and it can be a bit of a pain to set up. For otherwise simple tasks like multiple email accounts, Thor is the best mailer in the world when it comes to email.

YAM

Current Version: 2.0 preview 7

Available from: <http://www.yam.ch/>

Price: Free

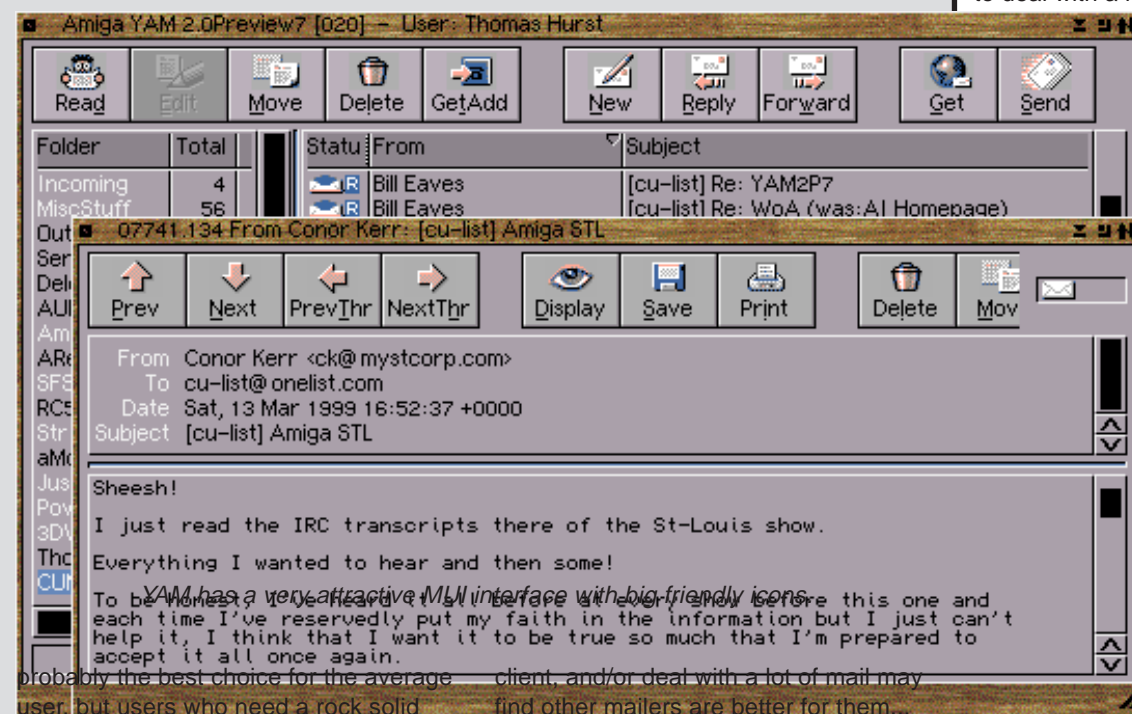
Yam (short for Yet Another Mailer) is probably the most well known and most popular email package in use on the Amiga today. It's the only one of the three reviewed here that is free, and this is likely to attract many of you to it straight away.

There are two major versions of Yam available - 1.3.5 and various flavours of 2.0. 2.0 is still in development, with preview versions periodically being released to keep it's users happy. 2.0 is by far the most popular.

The first thing you see when you start Yam is a nice splash window, with a progress bar telling you how far through loading Yam is. On a heavily loaded copy of Yam you'll be seeing a lot of this window, because Yam has a tendency to slow down the more mails and folders you have set up.

After a few seconds loading you're presented with a large window with an attractive row of big, friendly buttons on the top, and two lists - one of your folders, and another showing the emails in whatever folder you've selected. Double clicking on an email brings it up in a new window, again with nice friendly buttons to reply, forward etc. With this sort of design, almost anybody can set up a working system quite easily.

As with all good emailers, Yam has powerful filtering abilities, making it an



In most EMail programs you can send a message to several recipients by putting their email addresses into the To: box by commas. In Thor and Microdot you can add multiple recipients straight from your address book too.

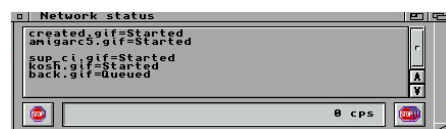
AWeb

John Chandler reviews his pick of the Browsers

Some people gripe that the Amiga lacks a decent web browser, but in actual fact the Amiga is currently blessed with three that are all worthy in their own right. Yvon Rozijn's AWeb-II is one such browser, and I'll confess straight away that I've been a big fan of it since the very early days. AWeb is unique amongst current Amiga browser offerings in that it uses ClassAct in preference to the more widespread MUI - a pro or a con depending on who you are. AWeb feels, to me, like the fastest browser out of all three, renders everyday pages correctly (not that there is much 'correctness' on the WWW), and is very stable.

Minimum requirements are suitably slim: OS 3.0, 2 MB of RAM and a TCP/IP stack if you want to access the Internet (obviously). In reality, more Fast RAM, a graphics card and a faster processor all enhance your software in leaps and bounds, and AWeb is no exception. Certainly Fast RAM is a serious must if you want to get the most out of web browsing.

Despite criticism about the user interface from various people, I find AWeb to be very well arranged in contrast to IBrowse and Voyager, with plenty of options, a sizable amount of customisation capability and a clean, uncluttered environment. The hotlist manager for example is a joy to use, far better than that found on heavyweights like Netscape, but perhaps let down by presenting the whole bookmark list as a page - for someone with a lot of hotlinks this can get a little awkward. The cache manager is unsurpassed, and I use it a lot to read material offline (saving on phone bills), save out interesting pages or make efficient use of my cache space. I'm fussy like that.



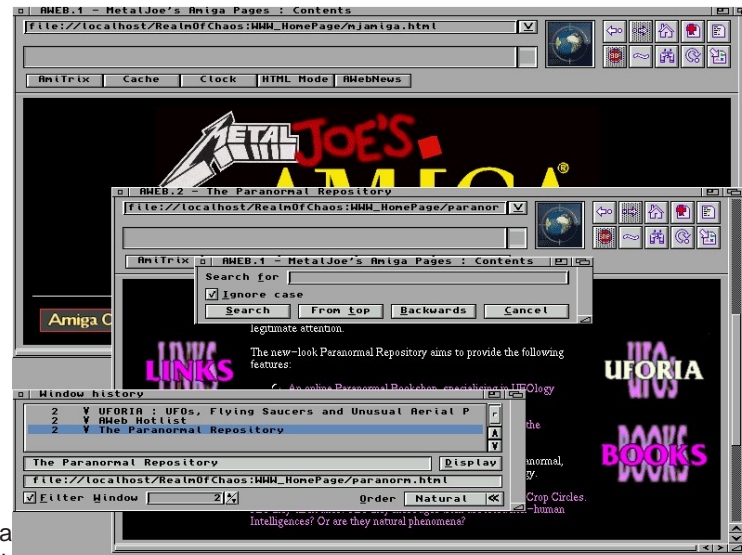
The useful Network status window allows you to cancel individual files.

The optional network status window is another handy feature I tend to use a lot when browsing, keeping me informed about downloads, transfer rates and so on - and it gives me a quick route towards terminating everything in one quick click, or selectively stopping things such as a rather time-consuming download. A further sign of AWeb's powerful environment and support for the power user.

Being a web developer, the ability to change things such as HTML compatibility, rendering of particular tags, and even break or debug errant JavaScript applications is a real boon that puts Netscape and Internet Explorer to shame. Speaking of JavaScript, this is currently the only Amiga browser to support the popular client-side scripting language. Compatibility is for the 1.1 version of the language, though a few niggles do crop up with some scripts from time-to-time. Considering the fact that JavaScript compatibility between even the various versions of Netscape (who created the language) is surprisingly poor in places, AWeb makes an excellent effort and you'd be hard-pressed to discover these niggles in practice.

AWeb also provides good support for a variety of facilities many now expect as standard on contemporary browsers: the ubiquitous FTP and mailto: support, as well as a more-than-adequate online newsgroup reader, and SSL capability through MiamiSSL. Full colour printing of pages is also provided, for which a printer driver such as TurboPrint is highly recommended, but you might find that each page of a multi-page hard copy often has a tiny (about a line of text) section missing at the end for some reason - it may just be me, though. ARexx and a good plugin API follow up the rear, allowing AWeb to be extended beyond the designs of its creator - a good supply of plugins and scripts are available from sources like Aminet or Amitrix's AWeb support page.

In general use AWeb holds up well in the face of a Web dominated by Netscape and Internet Explorer running on the Wintel platform, and the only pages I've ever encountered problems with have



the specific one it was designed for would cope. You can always opt to spoof as Mozilla (Netscape) or IE4, downgrade the HTML standards tolerance or disable JavaScript in the worst case, but I've not yet needed to take any such action. A context-sensitive pop-up menu activated by the right mouse button provides quick access to useful options when browsing, and you can customise this fully so you're guaranteed that your favourite commands are always available exactly where you need them - quickly and painlessly.

Speed is the real reason I use AWeb though, it tears through most pages with blistering ease, though large tables and particularly massive pages (over 100 or 200k) don't go so swiftly on my 030. IBrowse and Voyager seem slightly sluggish in comparison.

In conclusion, AWeb is unjustifiably regarded as the little brother of the 'big three' browsers - Voyager, IBrowse and AWeb. It's a fast, customisable, highly capable browser with good support for various Internet services - equally suitable for the World Wide Web newbie as it is for the Internet power user. If you're looking for the best Amiga web browser, look no further than AWeb.

Results



STricQ

Gary Storm looks at this popular cross-platform communication tool

STricQ is the Amiga version of Mirabilis' ICQ, on the PC. Those of you who have ever seen or used a chat room or AmIRC will become familiar with STRicq very quickly, as it's fundamentally the same type of thing, but on a more personal (and in some ways, more powerful) level.

Whereas IRC (Internet Relay Chat), is a virtual chat held on internet channels between many people, or private chats between two, STRicq is a private chat and message service between two people over the Internet.

So, what's the difference, I hear you cry?

ICQ is a strange abbreviation, isn't it? It stands for exactly what the program does. I Seek You. When you register for your ICQ number, your details are added to Mirabilis' huge database of

ICQ users from all platforms. Then (if people know your name, nickname, or e-mail address, they can search for you and add your details (so they can contact you) to their ICQ address book. The huge advantage of this over IRC programs, is that whenever you go online with STRicq, it will check with the ICQ network to see who else you have listed in your address

book is online, and tell you about it (you can assign sounds to practically anything, so you needn't be glued to the STRicq screen, go browsing or whatever and STRicq will

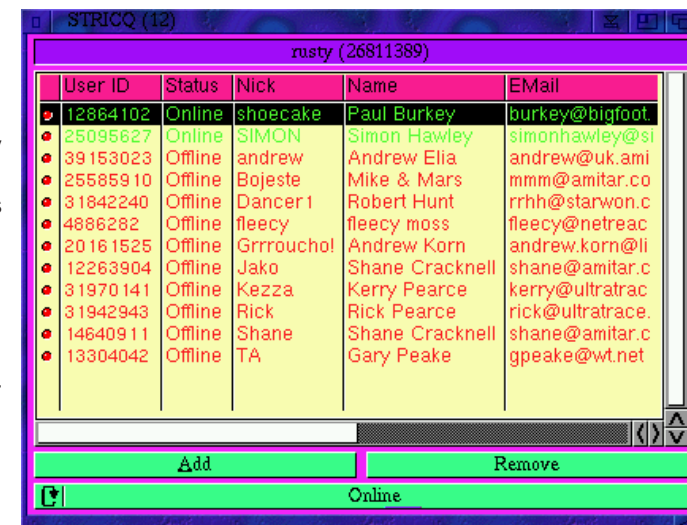
'beep' you when a friend is online). Even if no friends are online for a chat at the same time as you are, you can still read any messages they've left for you, and you can send messages to them (which are saved on the Mirabilis network for them, until they come online).

This is a fantastic communication device with a much more personal touch than IRC (when you initialise a chat, a new window opens up where you can see every letter and mistake they type

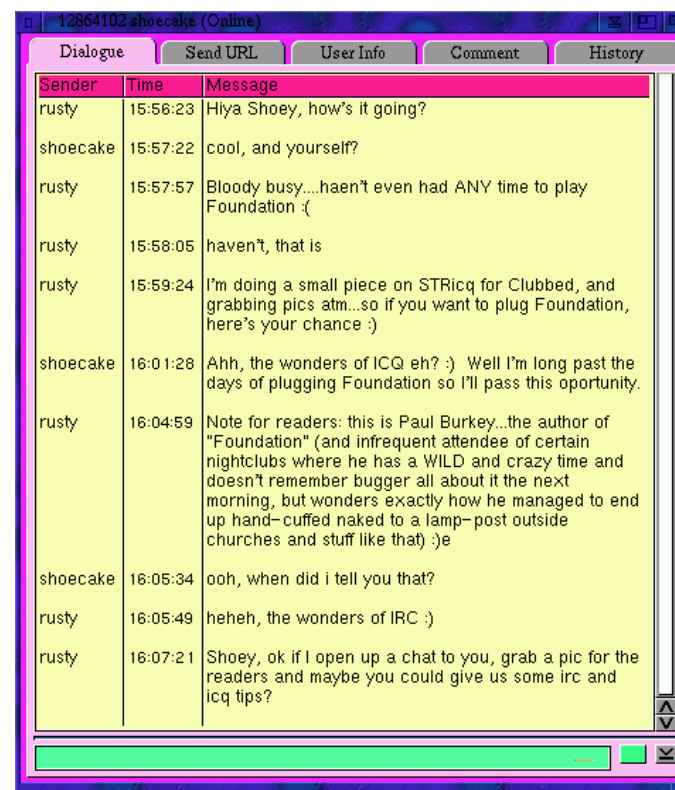
in real time, as they type it), with all the power of IRC as well (you can still send pictures etc to each other through Stricq).

STricq is not without it's bug's though, it get's a little flaky sometimes, and as it's so popular (there are hundreds of thousands of pc'ers using the same servers) it's sometimes hard to get connected (tip: close it and start it up again until you get through). It's bloody good though (especially for a free program), and well worth getting if you're on the net.

No doubt you've been wondering what STRicq stands for? Try 'Star-Trek Robotech' icq.the author's two favourite sci-fi programmes :)



Using the list in the main window you can see when your friends are on-line.



Once you've found someone currently on-line you can chat to them and even send URLs and files.

Product Information

Developer: Douglas F. McLaughlin
Version: 0.1371
WWW:
<http://owl.net/amiga/stricq/>
Price: Freeware

TurboPrint 7

Mick Sutton and Robert Williams find out if the latest release of Turbo Print can help them get more from their printers.

If you want to use a modern printer on your Amiga, the supplied workbench printer drivers just cannot cut the mustard. You can find PD drivers for most printers that will do an adequate job of printing text, however if you wish to output high quality graphics then you will have to part with some cash and purchase a commercial printing package. Turboprint is one such package and version 7, that we are looking at here, has just recently been released.

So what do you get for your money? First and foremost the whole Workbench printer system is effectively replaced by one that supports modern printers. Graphics Publisher is an application that allows you to print all your graphics in simple layouts. Turbospool is a utility that queues print jobs whilst the printer is busy. And finally Ghostscript, which allows 24 bit printing from many applications that support postscript.

Installation

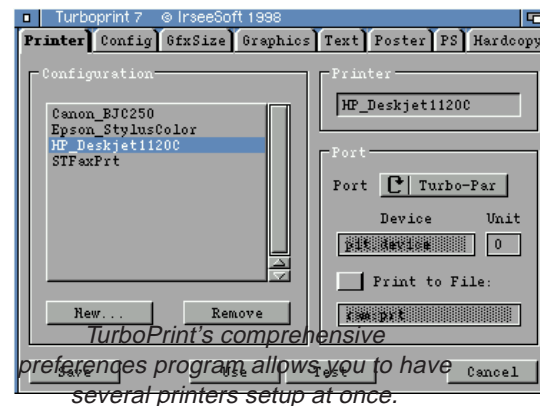
Installation is very straightforward using the standard Amiga installer, you only have to answer a few questions such as where to install to, what printer you have, do you wish Turboprint or Turbospool to be activated on start-up etc. Turboprint installs all its files into its own directory except icons in the WB start-up drawer if you chose it to be active on start-up. Because it replaces the printer device on the fly you can return to the Workbench printer system simply by not running Turboprint, or using the supplied NoTurbo program.

Turboprint-The Driver

Even with the latest 3.1 release of Amiga OS the printer driver system has remained unchanged from when the Amiga was released in 1985. This means that the drivers only support antique printers and worse still, can only print the palette of the original chipset, that is 4096 colours or 16 greyscales.

Turboprint on the other hand supports most up to date printers and can print in 24 bit (16 million colours) or 256 greyscales. This is achieved by replacing the printer device (in memory not on disk), so Turboprint receives the data when applications print. Unfortunately, applications not designed with Turboprint in mind only send the 4096 colour data for the normal Workbench drivers, however Turboprint still manages to get far better results than the Workbench system.

Turboprefs replaces the Workbench printer preferences programs while TurboPrint is active, and provides far more control over the print than the standard prefs. This includes an option to choose the type of media you are going to print on, ranging from standard copier paper through to inkjet paper, glossy paper to speciality media like OHP film. You can also choose the resolution you will print at, as TurboPrint supports the full range available on any particular printer. One very useful feature is that you can set up several different drivers at once, so if you have several printers or several sets of options you commonly use, you can define and name each one and then simply pick it from a list when it's needed. Although there are lots of options you can set within TurboPrefs,



the default settings supplied are excellent. In most cases you simply need to pick the type and size of paper and resolution you want, then TurboPrint does the rest. Unless you have a very particular application in mind you will probably find you will not have to change most of the other settings, however if there is something out of the ordinary you need then there are loads of options such as different dither patterns, colour correction, and smoothing. Other features include built in poster printing, and screen dumping.

Graphics Publisher

Graphic Publisher is a printing application that uses Turboprint in 24 bit resolutions and is optimised to give the best colour output. Pictures of various formats (iff, jpeg, gif, PCD, and many others) can be loaded directly without memory limitations, because Graphics Publisher has its own virtual memory system - this means that you can print huge images at full quality even on an Amiga with little memory. Pictures are previewed in colour, and Graphics Publisher supports CyberGraphX for 24 bit display if you have a graphics card. Several images can be placed on the same page and each one can be sized and cropped independently.

Another great feature is the

Product Information

Developer: Irsee Soft
Distributor: Compute!
Tel: +44 (0) 181 303 1800
WWW:
www.irseesoft.com
www.wizard-d.demon.co.uk
Address: 5 Blackfen Parade
 Sidcup
 Kent, DA15 9LU
Price: £39.99

PhotoOptimize function that can be applied to an image, which is designed to get the absolute best quality from photographic images, in particular skin tones. Besides doing a great job simply printing pictures and photos, Graphics Publisher also has some limited DTP facilities that make it ideal for many print jobs where images are the main content. You can add multi-line text boxes to the page that can use any Compugraphic font installed in your Fonts: drawer. Although all the text in the box must be in the same font and size you can have as many boxes as you like. You can then give the text, the box background, and outline different colours (or leave them transparent). One useful feature is that you can change the dimensions of the box independently of the text (I've found this useful for making cassette and CD covers).

Once you have got a layout set-up as you want it Graphics Publisher allows you to save it, yet this does not save the images into a huge file, just the layout information and a pointer to each image so they can be re-loaded. You can use the saved file as a template by simply selecting the image you want to replace and choosing Load... from the Picture menu, GP will then place the new image in the same position as the old one (after asking you if you want to replace it).

Although it doesn't have an AREXX port, Graphics Publisher accepts some options when run from a shell that enables you to automate printing a single image. You can specify the size of the print and if it is centred. Unfortunately, you cannot choose an exact position.

Ghostscript

Even with TurboPrint installed the best quality prints can only be obtained when printing from programs that specifically

support TurboPrint. The reason behind this is that programs designed with the original AmigaOS printer system in mind do not pass 24bit data to the printer device (because it does not support 24bit printing). Turboprint is very good at making the most of the data that is sent and achieves far better results than the standard drivers but it still can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

There are a few programs, including Graphics Publisher, Photogenics and DrawStudio that can use TurboPrint directly and thus output at full quality, but the vast majority of applications do not. In version 7 Irseesoft have come up with a very cunning solution to this problem which uses the postscript output which most professional applications have. TP7 comes bundled with Ghostscript which is a freeware

postscript interpreter that has the capability of rendering postscript files to 24bit bitmap data. Turboprint then takes this 24bit data and prints it at the highest quality. Instructions on setting up several popular applications (PageStream, Final Writer, Wordworth etc.) to print using this method are supplied but it is very simple to use. Ghostscript uses a device called PS: and is set-up to print, via TurboPrint, any postscript file sent to that device.

Anyone who has tried to install Ghostscript manually will know it's quite a job but the TP implementation is simplicity itself. Being all part of the main installer all you have to do is choose where you want to put it. Configuration is then carried out on a new PS page in the TurboPrefs program and any prints sent to PS: use the paper size, quality, and other settings from TurboPrefs too. Because most applications send 24bit data to Postscript printers the quality of the printouts is much improved. In my case I can now print brilliantly from PageStream 3 to my new HP Deskjet. As with the standard printing the Ghostscript method can only print what is sent by the application, and Wordworth causes a problem because it only seems to send greyscale image



You can make quite complex layouts just using Graphics Publisher, as shown here. Note the Picture Settings palette with the various colour adjustments available.

data to postscript (presumably assuming a Postscript printer will be a black and white laser), so all images come out in shades of grey. However, the postscript method does work well with many programs.

Conclusion

Turboprint brings the Amiga into the 90's regarding printing, in fact in some ways it surpasses the drivers developed for other platforms. So to sum up, if you intend to attach a modern printer to your Amiga Turboprint really is the way to go.

Results

Pros

Fantastic output quality
 Support for a wide range of printers
 Powerful Graphics Publisher



Buyer Beware: Even with Turbo Print you still need to have your wits about you when shopping for a printer for your Amiga. Many manufacturers now sell "Win Printers" which cannot work without their Windows driver.

Epson Stylus Photo

Mick Sutton finds the perfect companion for his digital camera

The quality and speed of modern day inkjet printers is improving all the time. While the prices are still falling, I decided it was time to upgrade from my existing Canon BJC 600 that had served me well for four years, but could not match the latest generation of inkjets available.

In the past, Amiga owners were very limited to which printers they could use with their machines due to the lack of available drivers, and the limited workbench printer driver system (only capable of outputting up to 4,096 colours or 16 shades of grey). But that changed with the introduction of 3rd party printing packages such as Studio (current version 2.20) and Turboprint (current version 7). I have Turboprint which not only provides drivers for a wide range of modern printers but also replaces the printer device with one that supports 24 bit printing. Several of my friends at work own Epson Stylus Photo 700 printers and the print quality I have seen is outstanding, particularly photographic images. After deciding that this was the printer I wanted, and checking on the Isreesoft website that Turboprint supported it, I shopped around for a good price.

I saw the printer advertised on the Simply Computers website for £156 and as they were just around the corner from where I work, the deal was done.

Hardware

When I got the printer home, on inspection I noticed that there were no DIP switches to "fiddle" with and there were two inkjet cartridges supplied with the machine, one a large pure black and the other a 5 colour job. Installation of the cartridges is very straight forward just a matter of slotting them in the right way round and closing the

small footprint which I measured to be 43cm x 25cm with the paper tray folded away. Installation of the printer entails finding a space to locate it, a power socket nearby, and a centronics parallel cable to connect it to your Amiga.

Usage

Now the printer is ready to use, put some paper in and switch on, at this point the printer goes through its own test procedure which seems to last forever but in reality is probably only a minute or two.

Epson have made this printer very user friendly, it indicates when ink levels in the cartridges are getting low (about 5 full A4 pages to go) with a flashing LED. In fact there are only three buttons on the printer, power, page feed and head cleaning (held down for 3 seconds to replace cartridge).

As I said earlier, I have Turboprint so it was time to pick the appropriate driver from within the Turboprefs program, this provides a good set of defaults for high quality printing, so good in fact that I have not changed many settings.

With the right driver chosen it was time to try printing something, I selected a scanned photo of my daughter and loaded it into Graphics Publisher. I then chose the 720 x 720 DPI resolution with the Photo enhance option selected.

Printing speed is quite impressive, I printed the picture on 720 DPI Inkjet paper (A4) in about 6 minutes and the quality was astounding with hardly any sign of dithering whatsoever, in fact even at this resolution (maximum resolu-



A simple control panel and plenty of instructions inside make the Stylus Photo 700 very easy to use.

tion is 1440 x 720) printing to photo glossy paper, you have to look very hard to see the difference between a print and an original photograph.

This quality is achieved by a combination of high resolution and five colour inks compared to the normal three found in most inkjets. The extra colours reduce the amount of dithering required, particularly in light shaded areas such as skin tones and skies. The final print has no sign of banding whatsoever and this is due to the microwave system employed.

Good results are obtainable from all good quality paper, but for better results I found Epson 720 dpi paper gave good sharp images showing vibrant colours and because it is coated absorbs less ink, but for ultimate quality you can use Photo Glossy paper which produces astounding output very close to a real photo.

Conclusion

So in conclusion this printer is absolutely brilliant, it produces the best photo

quality output I have seen anywhere and I must add, also produces sharp clear text output from such programs as Final Writer or Pagemaster.

The price of the Photo 700 is comparable to many 3 colour inkjets, but there is no comparison with photo quality this printer is streets ahead.

Results

Pros

Excellent Photo quality
Easy to use
Great value



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 £15 + £2 P&P (UK)
 Contains Worms Directors Cut & Oh Yes More Worms CD.

Product Information

Developer: Epson
Distributor: Most Retailers
WWW: www.epson.com
Price: £150 approx.
Driver: Reviewed using TurboPrint 7 (see page 28)

The printer has a built in sheet feeder which can take a stack of A4 paper. The paper is fed through the printer from the sheet feeder at the back onto a tray at the front at an angle of about 135 degrees, ie quite flat and therefore tends not to curl the paper and allows feeding of heavier paper/card. Due to the mechanical layout of the printer it has quite a

BVision PPC

I have looked on in great envy in the past, when I saw just how good a computer display is with a graphics card. When I bought my A1200 in 1993, I was impressed with the AGA chipset's graphics output, after all - 256 colours on screen all at once was a big improvement over my previous machine the A500+. However, times have moved on and we want more colours, speed, and higher resolutions to feed our appetite for more powerful applications and games. As I have said in an earlier review of the PPC card, one of the main reason for buying the PPC card was that a graphics card was soon to be available for it with much higher specifications than any other graphics cards available for the A1200.

Fitting

The card comes in two parts, one part the graphics card itself, the other the interface board that has a socket to connect to the monitor. The two boards are connected by way of shielded ribbon cable, which allows you to mount the interface board in any type of tower, as long as you have a suitable cut-out.

The PPC card has to be removed from your A1200 to enable you to connect the graphics card to it. The board mounts on a connector that is at right angles to the accelerator edge connector. Then the two boards are firmly held together by two supplied screws, which eliminate any problems with the boards parting company, especially when mounted vertically in a tower. Next the whole assembly has to be fitted to the A1200

motherboard and this requires disconnecting the LED connector and floppy drive cable from the motherboard. Now for the difficult bit, manoeuvring the whole assembly into position so that the accelerator aligns with the A1200 edge connector and the graphics card sits over the motherboard. The LED's can then be reconnected through the hole in the BVision card and the floppy cable can be connected to its header. I then had to find a place to



mount the interface card within my tower, and as I did not have a cut out I had to use a blanking plate (not supplied) in one of my tower's slots. Then I connected the two boards with the shielded ribbon.

Software Installation

Once the board is all in place the next step is to install the supplied software that includes CyberGraphX 3, and an upgrade for the PPC flash ROM. Phase 5 recommends that you upgrade the flash ROM before you install CyberGraphX. To install the flash ROM upgrade you have boot your machine whilst holding down the "S" key and both mouse buttons, then when the early start-up menu appears choose the Boot Options button and disable all hard drive partitions. Next boot with no start-up sequence holding the "S" key once again (but not the mouse buttons this time), and the shell window appears. Now insert the supplied floppy and run the flash update program (two versions

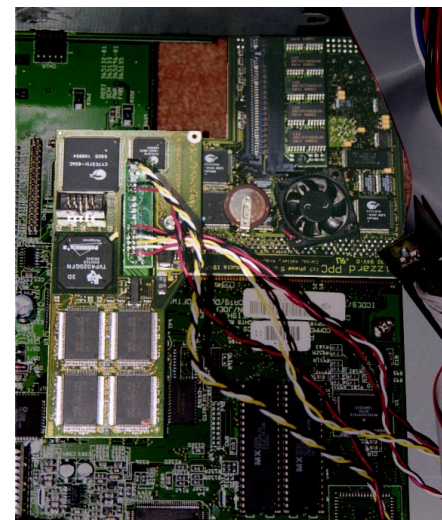
Mick Sutton looks at the ultimate A1200 graphics card.

exist 040, and 060). Boot your machine in the normal manner and install the CyberGraphX software that using standard installer program. During the installation you have to specify the maximum horizontal frequency of your monitor (check the monitor handbook) and a few CyberGraphX options which are explained in the installer help.

Usage

You now have to reboot your Amiga to make the BVision monitor driver active. At this point the workbench is still in the AGA screenmode, so the first thing to do is to choose a new one in the screenmode preferences program that you will notice has many new screenmodes, ranging from 8 bit (256 colours) to 24 bit (16 million colours). Due to the fact that there is no pass-through for AGA screenmodes (the monitor has to be plugged into either the graphics card or the Amiga monitor connector) I had to save my setting and switch of the computer to enable me to connect my monitor to the graphics card. When I switched on my beloved Amiga again I could not believe the difference the card had made... I was in 1024 x 768 16 bit and I could not help noticing how much better it looked than Double PAL Hi Res no flicker 32 colours!

Basically all the applications on my computer were able to use all the offered screenmodes, and some games notably Quake, and more recently Napalm. All applications benefit from higher resolution and speed increases even though they were never written with CyberGraphX in mind. Applications that have specific CyberGraphX support such as Photogenics, IBrowse, Pagestream and most current programs get a huge boost because they can show images in Truecolour (16 Million) and with the BVision there is no noticeable difference in speed between 8 bit and 24 bit - wow! What people do not realise is that when a graphics card is fitted you also get a speed benefit, particularly with serial devices such as modems etc...



The BVision and PPC card installed.

Conclusion

The quality of the hardware is faultless, but I was a little disappointed with the supplied manual (if you can call it that) - one sheet of paper, as seems to be the standard these days. The manual is just about adequate in explaining the installation but only has two short paragraphs on usage which in my opinion is just not enough, particularly with newcomers to graphics cards. Fortunately I belong to a user group and had lots of help and advice. Many users invest in a faster processor of one type or another, but few seem as keen to upgrade their Amiga's graphical capabilities. I tell you now that once you have taken the step to get a graphics card and have used it, you will be thinking to yourself how did I ever manage before.

Results

Pros

Huge range of screenmodes.
Fast in all resolutions and depths.
High build quality.

Cons

No pass-through for AGA.
Minimal documentation.



Back to Basics

1: The Startup-Sequence and User-Startup

In the first of this regular series Robert Williams explains the Amiga's startup scripts and some common software installation problems.

When your Amiga boots up (the process of starting the machine and loading the operating system) a file in the 'S' directory on the disk you boot from is automatically executed, this file is called the startup-sequence. Rather than a normal program this file is an AmigaDOS script which is a text file listing commands to be executed in turn (see the shell box out for more on scripts and commands). As it is simply a text file the startup-sequence can be edited allowing new commands to be automatically executed every time you boot. However because a correct startup-sequence is essential for the reliable operation of your Amiga Commodore added a second file, also in the 'S' directory, called user-startup to which users and applications can add their commands without risking making errors in the startup-sequence.

Because the user-startup is executed after most of the startup-sequence is complete some programs and utilities have to be started in the startup-sequence itself, if this is required it will be explained in the program's documentation.

Here are some of the most important things that happen in the startup-sequence (see the 'Example startup-sequence' box out on the

next page for what number relates to which section:

1. Env: Set-up

The ENV: assignment (see the "Problems With Assigns" section for more information) points to a directory which holds configuration files for the system and most programs. The configuration files are stored in the directory sys:Prefs/env-archive/ and then copied to the ENV: directory by the startup-sequence. By default ENV: points to Ram:ENV/. This means that temporary program settings are kept in ENV: only where as permanent settings are also saved to env-archive and are thus available when you re-boot. The Workbench preferences programs and many others use this to implement Save (settings saved into env-archive and env:) and Use (settings saved in ENV:) options.

2. System Assigns Set-up

The Amiga OS uses several assigns to identify system directories, which are set-up here. A few assigns are made by default and don't need to be set-up by the startup-sequence these include sys: which points to the disk that was booted from, C: for the commands directory (sys:c/) on the boot disk and S: for the scripts directory (sys:s/) on the boot disk.

3. DOSDrivers

Mounts all the DOSDrivers in the devs:dosdrivers/ directory (More on DOSDrivers in the next issue).

4. Monitors

Binds the monitor drivers which adds the screen modes from all the monitor files in the devs:monitors/ drawer to the display list (which can be seen in the screenmode preferences program).

5. IPrefs

This command reads the preferences files saved by the various Workbench preferences programs and makes the changes set in them. This includes settings like the screenmode and the background patterns etc.

6. Path

The system path is a list of the directories in which the operating system looks when you try and execute a command without specifying where it is. For example if you type a command name in a shell the system will find it in the C directory because it is on the path.

WARNING!

Making changes to your Amiga's startup files, in particular the startup-sequence, can prevent the machine from booting or cause problems with other software. Take care when changing these files and always have a backup handy. For example if you made a backup called startup-sequence.bak and left it in the 'S' directory to restore it you would:

- Switch on or reset your Amiga while holding down both mouse buttons to get the Early Startup menu.
- Click the 'Boot with no Startup' option.
- Then when the prompt appears type "copy s:startup-sequence.bak s:startup-sequence" (without quotes) and press Return.
- Finally reset the Amiga and it should boot as normal.

To restore a backup of you user-startup called user-startup.bak use the command "copy s:user-startup.bak s:user-startup".

Product Information

Developer: Phase 5 Digital Prod.
Distributor: White Knight Tech.
Tel: +44 (0) 1920 822321
WWW: www.phase5.de
www.welcome.to/white-knight
Address: PO Box 38
Ware
Herts, SG11 1TX
Price: £139

7. User-Startup

Executes all the commands in the user-startup file.

8. LoadWB

Loads the Workbench.

Comments

You'll notice that some of the lines in the startup-sequence are prefixed with a semicolon (;). In AmigaDOS scripts any text on a line after a semicolon is not executed, the idea behind this is that you can add comment to your script to remind yourself and others what it does without causing errors or writing a separate document. The semicolon can also be used to temporarily stop a line from executing without actually deleting the line from the script, this is often called 'commenting out' a line.

Problems With Assigns

There are two problems many people come across which are usually related to the Assign commands that most programs add to your user-startup when they are installed. If you want to delete a program's directory Workbench will often give you an "Object is in use" error and if you move a program's directory on your hard disk sometimes it will no longer run. The Assign command assigns a logical device name to a particular directory on your hard disk. What this means is that you can refer to that directory by the assigned name in the same way you refer to a device by its name. For example your floppy disk drive has the device name DF0:, in a file requester you choose the disk in that drive by picking DF0: in the volumes list. If the logical device name Pictures: is assigned to the directory Work:files/graphics/pictures/ then choosing Pictures in the volumes list would take you straight to that directory.

Many programs use the assign command to assign a logical device name to their program

The Shell

Several times in this feature I've talked about the shell and entering commands. The shell is another method of giving instructions to your Amiga. You are probably used to running programs and dealing with files using Workbench but it's also possible to do all these things (and some things you can't do with Workbench) by entering text commands into a shell window. The instructions you enter into the shell window are called AmigaDOS commands and each one is a separate program, usually stored in the 'C' directory of your Workbench disk. Once you've learnt some AmigaDOS commands you can string them together in a text file to make a script. Scripts can then be executed at any time carrying out all the commands in turn, this is exactly what the startup-sequence and user-startup are, AmigaDOS script files.

To open a shell window:

- From the Workbench menu choose Execute Command then type "newshell".
- Open the 'System' drawer on your Workbench disk or partition and double click on the Shell icon.

directory so they can find the files they need on your hard disk. They place the assign command in the user-startup so the assign is made every time you boot. When you try to delete a drawer (On the Workbench directories are shown as drawers) which has an assign pointing to it Workbench will give the "Object is in use" error. So before you can delete the drawer you need to remove the assign command from your user-startup, here's how:

- Open a shell (see the Shell box out for how to do this). Make a backup of your user-startup file by typing "copy s:user-startup s:user-startup.bak" and press Return (see the WARNING section for more details).
- Type "ed s:user-startup" and press Return. This loads the user-startup script into an editor.
- Using the cursor keys move down the file until you find the portion related to the program that you want to delete. Usually this is marked by BEGIN and END lines, for example:
;BEGIN MyProgram
Assign MyProgram:
Work:applications/utilities/myprogram/
;END MyProgram
- The safest way to remove this to put a semicolon (;) in front of it which stops the line being executed, then if you need to put the line back you simply edit the user-startup again and remove the semicolon. Our Assign line would now look like:
;Assign MyProgram:
Work:applications/utilities/myprogram/
- Now choose 'Save' from the ed 'Project' menu and then quit the program.
- Now you need to reboot your Amiga as changes to the startup files only take effect when you boot the Amiga.
- After a reboot you should be able to delete the drawer which was assigned.

Once it's deleted and you're confident everything is still working properly you can delete the lines from your user-startup completely. Simply edit the file again as we did above, move the cursor to all the lines relating to the program you've deleted and choose 'Delete Line' from the 'Edit' menu for each one. Then save the file. If rather than deleting a program with an assign you simply want to move it to a different place on your hard drive then all you need to do is change the assign command in the user-startup file to point to the new position.

- So as before open a shell, backup your user-startup file then edit the original.
- Find the portion relating to the program that you want to move.
- Using our previous example if you wanted to move MyProgram from the Work:applications/utilities/ drawer to another partition (I'll use Files: in this example) you would change the line to:
Assign MyProgram: Files:myprogram/
- You would of course specify any subdirectories it is in.
- Then save the file and quit ed.
- After a reboot the program should run from its new home.

Ex. startup-sequence

; \$VER: startup-sequence 39.9 (9.8.92)

C:SetPatch QUIET
C:Version >NIL:
C:AddBuffers >NIL: DF0: 15
FailAt 21

C:MakeDir RAM:T RAM:Clipboards
RAM:ENV RAM:ENV/Sys
C:Copy >NIL: ENVARC: RAM:ENV ALL
NOREQ

Resident >NIL: C:Assign PURE
Resident >NIL: C:Execute PURE

Assign >NIL: ENV: RAM:ENV
Assign >NIL: T: RAM:T
Assign >NIL: CLIPS: RAM:Clipboards
Assign >NIL: REXX: S:
Assign >NIL: PRINTERS:
DEVS:Printers
Assign >NIL: KEYMAPS:
DEVS:Keymaps
Assign >NIL: LOCALE: SYS:Locale
Assign >NIL: LIBS: SYS:Classes ADD
Assign >NIL: HELP: LOCALE:Help
DEFER

IF NOT EXISTS SYS:Fonts
Assign FONTS:
EndIF

BindDrivers
C:Mount >NIL:
DEVS:DOSDrivers/~(/#?.info)

IF EXISTS DEVS:Monitors
IF EXISTS DEVS:Monitors/VGAOnly
DEVS:Monitors/VGAOnly
EndIF

C:List >NIL:
DEVS:Monitors/~(/#?.info|VGAOnly) TO
T:M LFORMAT "DEVS:Monitors/%s"
Execute T:M
C:Delete >NIL: T:M
EndIF

SetEnv Workbench \$Workbench
SetEnv Kickstart \$Kickstart
UnSet Workbench
UnSet Kickstart

C:IPrefs

C:ConClip

Path >NIL: RAM: C: SYS:Utilities
SYS:Rexxc SYS:System S: SYS:Prefs
SYS:WBStartup SYS:Tools
SYS:Tools/Commodities

IF EXISTS S:User-Startup
Execute S:User-Startup
EndIF

Resident Execute REMOVE
Resident Assign REMOVE

C:LoadWB
EndCLI >NIL:

Quake

Quake has caused a revolution in gaming, not only for it's excellent graphics and sound, but for it's ability to have many players fight it out at the same time, either over a Local Area Network (LAN), or over the Internet.

Online Quake is massive, and the chances are that your ISP has it's own Quake server you can log on to and play with very low response times.

The basics of joining a net game are in fact very simple - ensure you are online, fire up Quake, bring up the console (by pressing tilde (~)), and type "connect name.of.server". If you want to automate this, just run quake with the argument "+connect name.of.server", e.g, to connect to the server quake.clara.net, just cd to your Quake directory and type:

Quake +connect quake.clara.net

After a short period of time, you should find yourself in a deathmatch map, and this is where the fun begins...

For your first couple of games you'll probably find yourself getting thrashed, but don't get disheartened - this is quite normal. The best thing you can do to get around it is to practice loads, and considering how fun net Quake can be this shouldn't be a problem... at least until the phone bill arrives.

But all is not lost if you can only afford a few hours a week - you can get special add ons to Quake called "Bots" that act as other players in deathmatches, but work when you are offline. By far the best Quake bot is the popular Reaper Bot. They change their behaviour according to how well you play, and they learn levels as they go along. Just do a web search and you're sure to find the latest version. Don't worry if it all seems very PC specific - Amiga Quake is practically identical to PC Quake.

Normal Quake is only the tip of the iceberg - many Quake add-on packs and Total Conversions (TC's) are capable of net play as well, and these bring new dimensions to Quake, and many surpass it easily. The likes of



Malice, Air Quake, Quake Rally and hundreds of others are available. Instructions on how to play them online should come with the packages.

My favourite is easily Team Fortress - a team play game where up to 16 players fight it to capture the flag from the enemies fortress and take it back to their own. With many different "skins" for players, ranging from Engineers who build gun emplacements and repair armour to spies who disguise themselves to infiltrate the enemy base. Take a look at the Clan Risen home page and see how you can join in the fun...

Clans

If you're good at Online Quake, you might want to consider joining a Clan - a team of Quake lovers who hold battles against other Clans. There are plenty around, including a number of Amiga ones (two are to be found in the boxout).

Although you don't need to be in a clan to have fun, the really big fragfests tend to be when two clans arrange a time to meet. It's no fun with just two or three people running around a huge level, especially with the likes of Team Fortress and CTF, but when the big matches with up to 16 players on at once, you really begin to see what online Quake is about.

Deadly URLs

<http://crisen.home.pages.de/> - Clan Risen, home of Amiga Team Fortress
<http://home4.swipnet.se/~w-46939/AQM/> - Amiga Quake Mercenaries, Amiga clan
<http://www.goigoi.com/> - Goigoi, the definitive Amiga Quake site.
<http://www.planetquake.com/> - Planet Quake
<http://www.planetfortress.com/> - Home of Team Fortress

Thomas Hurst joins the on-line gaming revolution.

Setting Up Your Own Server

If you just want a game against one or two mates (or more, if you have a fast connection), you can set up something called a "listen server". This turns your copy of Quake into a simple Quake server others can connect to as they would any other server. To start a listen server, load Quake with the argument "+listen <number of players>". So if you wanted a game with up to 5 players in it, you type:

Quake +listen 5

To connect to you, others will need your IP address or hostname. You can get this by typing "echo \$host" into a shell. Others can then connect to the address that yields as they would any other server, you can load up your favourite map, and you can fight it out.

Now the Bad News...

Sadly, online Quake is a dying game. While we play normal Quake, the rest of the world is playing the Internet optimised version, Quake World. Unfortunately, despite promises from ClickBOOM, there is no Amiga version. Quake World is incompatible with normal Quake, and so, we are left playing against other Amiga users, or PC users with fast connections out to get easy kills by pouncing before the enemy sees them.

But all is not lost. The source code to Quake and Quake World are scheduled for public release at the end of the year, so around January we can expect to see Amiga 68k, PPC and Warp3D versions of Quake and Quake World!

Happy fragging...

CandyFactory Pro

Gary Storm puts this easy to use effects package through its paces. See the final result in glorious Technicolour on the back cover!

I'm no artist. I have a lot of good idea's, but when I draw, my ducks turn out like sheep. Which is why I rushed to buy Candy Factory Pro, as it lets me make even the simplest text and pictures look like works of art (well, nearly). Don't think that Candy Factory Pro is just good for web-site logos and fancy headings, as it's also a great way to put posters and cards together.

Candy Factory Pro is best used with a PPC accelerator and graphics card, but is also great for 68k (just slower).

The best way to illustrate Candy though, is to eat it, let's start munching.

Loading a Background Picture

On starting Candy, the default 'canvas' of 320x256 appears. To do a poster or card, you'll need to know the size of the picture you've decided to use (write it down).

Select 'New Project', and type in the size of your picture (800x600 in this case).

Select 'Windows' - 'Color Texture'. This lets you load pictures and textures on the foreground and background. Click the 'Edit' gadget so that it reads 'Background', and then click the '?' gadget. Choose your picture to load, via the lister. You won't see anything but black at first... don't panic :) Close the 'Color Texture' window to save screen-space.

Select 'Windows' - 'Materials' to bring that window up. Click the 'Edit' gadget to read 'Background'. Then click on the three lighting controllers, and drag the sliders all the way to the right (255 = white). Voila! - your picture is then seen, as you just turned the lights on.

The lighting controls are also handy for making a picture moodier, as you can tint it any colour(s) you want (experiment). 'Color' is the main light, and affects everything, 'Specular' is the



The Materials window sets the colour and lighting applied to the objects and background.

The settings shown here allow you to see a background image undistorted.

colour of the highlights, and 'Ambient' is kind of like low mood lighting. The 'Shading' gadget is handy for different effects - try them (I like 'normal' and 'metal' the best), but we'll leave the background as 'none'. 'Glossiness' is another sort of brightness, and is useful for the lighting mode on shiny text, and 'Environment Map' is if you want to load up another texture on top of the picture/texture you already have loaded, and mix them together for even more weird and wonderful effects.

Text

Select 'Project' - 'Add Text'. A lister of all your fonts will appear. When you buy the CD, it has LOADS of Compugraphic fonts ready to install with Intellifont (which is in your System drawer), so install the ones you like (or all of them if you want to slow down your project).

Click the '?' next to the 'Fontname' field to load and choose a nice font.

"Candy" appears in the canvas as default, so type in the word(s) you want, and press 'Return' (don't click on 'OK' yet).

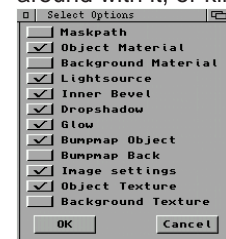
You may find that the text is too bit or too small, and that's why you haven't clicked

on 'OK' yet. You can drag the text around with the mouse, and change the size of it with the 'X Size' and 'Y Size' gadgets. Once it's in the position you like, press 'OK'.

Effects

In 'Project', 'New Project' clears the current project (beware), and 'Open Project' actually loads in a particular variation of effects. Load one of the projects ("BlueMetallic" in this case).

When the projects loader appears, there are a lot of options to have, or not to have, depending on your purpose, background, mood etc..., and you can only find out what is best for each thing you do by trial and error. Never keep 'Maskpath' on, as it will also load any text associated with the project settings (i.e. You'll lose your new text). As a general rule, 'Glow' and 'Shadow' don't normally go together as it's unnatural, but remember... rules are made to be broken (and we have). If you're going to be putting text onto a picture you've already selected, then make sure you uncheck anything to do with background ('Background material', 'Bumpmap back' and 'Background texture') or you'll lose the background picture. The other stuff can generally stay as you can play around with it, or kill it, as you wish. In this case, uncheck 'Maskpath' and all three background effects (as shown left). Press 'OK'.



If you want to change any of the effects, (as I did with BlueMetallic's Glow, bump and lightsource) load up their particular windows. Remember to select and leave the 'materials' window open, as you need to select between 'background' and 'object' for whichever you're manipulating via effects. Leave the 'object' (text) activated in this case.

Lightsource



Distance is exactly what it means... the closer the light is to the object - the brighter it is. Use the mouse to drag the light around the circle on the right to get the best lighting angle. Especially useful for bevelled objects.

Inner Bevel

Play around with the width and height, smoothing, and bottom/top slope (the most important - normally one is high and the other low), to get your 3D effect.

Dropshadow

Another tool for the 3D effect, where you can fiddle to your hearts content to get that perfect shadow. The lightsource positioning and brightness plays a part here, as it will determine where your shadow falls and it's strength.

Glow

After playing with this, the main decision will be whether to 'diffuse' (makes the glow smoother and not so strong) or not 'diffuse' (rougher and stronger) depending on the final feel you want. 'Central color' and 'Edge color' make a big difference to the feel too.

Bumpmap

Oooh, the fake 3D'ers best friend :), gives your background and/or object the texture it deserves. Fantastic, except for plastic :)

Colour Texture

We've already used this, but it can also load pictures and textures onto the object (text) as well... try it, it really makes a huge difference if you can find the right material. Many are already on the CD, but you can use a picture of yourself if you wanted (we did, and damn it was funny) :)

With many of these affects, you can move the backgrounds, textures and bumpmaps around via dragging the mouse, to get them in the best position possible for your composition.

Miscellaneous

One shortcoming of Candy Factory, is that it's not as easy as it could be, to combine different effects (via projects) to different text. The way around this is to save the picture at the final stage of your first bit of text using the 'Save Image' item in the 'Project' menu. Make sure you save the image in a 'Truecolor' format such as IFF24.



When you save an image the Render Settings window allows you to choose the format and quality you save in. Shown here are the settings to save a lossless IFF24 image.

Then select 'Image' - 'Clear Image'. Load in the picture you just saved onto the background again, add your next line of text and chuck a different set of effects its way. Keep saving the image, re-loading as a background then texting and effecting to your hearts desire (or until the room on the page runs out). The best way to make sure that the text is in the right place, is to load up your image on the workbench screen via CyberShow or something, and swap between the two screens for reference, and 'Clear Image' if the text isn't quite right, as 'Add Text' will have saved your previous text and settings so that you can adjust the text minutely until you're satisfied.

Save your final piece of art by 'Project' - 'Save Image'. Click on 'Format' so that 'Truecolor' is selected, and select the format you wish. If it's JPEG, you can also select the quality to save out as. It's a pity that GIF isn't supported yet, but not the end of the world.

Once you've found a combination of settings you like, you can save them as a project of your own with whichever effects, pictures and text you wish to include, by selecting 'Project' - 'Write Project'.

Useful Hints

To do a bit more than just text, you can draw your own white object on a black

background in your favourite paint program. Save it as an 8-bit IFF at the size you want, and load it into Candy Factory by selecting 'Project' - 'Load Mask'. Sometimes you may get a blank space down one side, but that's due to a strict sizing regime in Candy Factory... just carry on and crop the final picture.

It's always a good idea to load your text or object in, and then to save it at that stage, by 'Project' - 'Save Mask', just in case anything crashes.

'Inverse' is useful as it swaps the foreground with the background, to give a different effect.

You can use characters from different fonts as graphic objects... the boing balls and rings on the back cover are actually a '.' and 'o'.

'Realtime' - turn most of this off if you're working on 68k, but leave it all on for PPC. If you're going to want to use Candy Factory a lot, then you really should upgrade to a PPC and graphics card, as it makes everything so much quicker and easier, and real to the eye.

In Conclusion

At the end of the day, Candy Factory is a brilliant program for the artistically challenged. It's quick and ridiculously easy to get great graphics, logo's and post-cards etc. together. It could definitely be improved upon (drawing tools/adding masks to an existing picture), but it's still a triumph. Buy it yesterday.

Results

Pros

Ultra easy to use.
Outstanding results very quickly.
Brings out the hidden artist in all of us.

Cons

No GIF support for web graphics.
Hassle to use different effects on the same image.
No drawing tools.



HOT Websites

Lost on the World Wide Web with no where to go? Gary Storm finds some pages to call home.

Amiga

Visit the SEAL links page for all your Amiga Links: <http://seal.amiga.tm>

Search

Yahoo!	http://www.yahoo.com/
Yahoo! UK	http://www.yahoo.co.uk/
AltaVista	http://www.altavista.digital.com/
Lycos	http://www.lycos.com/
Excite	http://www.excite.com/
Webcrawler	http://www.webcrawler.com/
Ask Jeeves	http://www.askjeeves.com/
SearchUK	http://www.searchuk.com/
HotBot	http://www.hotbot.com/

The Internet is so vast that it can be hard to know where to start surfing. So on this page we've listed the URLs of some of our favourite websites.

If you can't find what you want then the search engines on the left are a good place to start looking. However be warned that a 'Search Engine' only looks for the text you type on the web pages it knows about. This means that using search engines can be pretty much hit and miss, and instead of finding sites about apple pies, you'll find everything you ever wanted to know about the I-Mac and pythagoras' theorem. Varying the words you input and trying different search engines often helps get better results.

News

The Onion	http://www.theonion.com/
PA News	http://www.pa.press.net/
Media Village	http://mediavillage.mediatel.co.uk/
CNN	http://www.cnn.com/
Electronic Newsstand	http://www.ewnews.com/
Megastories	http://www.megastories.com/
News Now	http://www.newsnow.co.uk/
The Smoking Gun	http://www.thesmokinggun.com/

The news behind the news.
The site the UK press look at.
Insiders news.
TV News on the web.
Links to 1,000s of online mags.
All the top news.
The pick of the hot headlines.
Dirt-diggers 'r' us.

While we were compiling this item we found loads of great sites and we haven't got room for them all. If you visit the SEAL website you'll find a page with all these links and many more for your browsing pleasure!

Art

Ad Graveyard	http://www.zeldman.com/ad.html	Ads that never made it to release.
The Al Phlipp Gallery	http://www.ransomgroup.com/al_phlipp/gallery/	Psychedelic man. Some nice digitally enhanced photos.
Chapapeela	http://rmb.ne.mediaone.net:80/baham/	Very good photography, including tasteful nudes.
Jim's Fine Art	http://www.spectrumvoice.com/art/index.html	Huge collection of scanned paintings.
Marc Deneyer	http://users.skynet.be/deneyer/	Great photo's of Greenland.

Tech

Wired	http://www.wired.com/	Techie news.
Newsline	http://www.newsline.com/	Links to many techie news stories.
Rocketry Online	http://www.rocketryonline.com/	
What Hi-Fi?	http://www.whathifi.com/	
Robert's Hi-Fi Links	http://www.unik.no/robert/hifi/hifi.html	Hundreds of links.
Sigma	http://www.sigmaphoto.com/	Into photography? Here you go.
DVD World	http://www.dvdworld.co.uk/	
Review Finder	http://www.reviewfinder.com/	Links to thousands of reviewed products.
Hotwired	http://www.hotwired.com/	Brilliant technology site.
Free Themes	http://www.mersinet.freethemes.com/	Themes for Windows, or DOpus Magellan!
Web Design Resource	http://www.pageresource.com/	

?

Bert is Evil	http://www.fractalcow.com/bert/bert.htm	Yep, the Burt from Sesame Street is actually a homicidal maniac.
Funny	http://www.funny.co.uk/	Links to humour all over.

Fun

Internet Movie Database	http://www.uk.imdb.com/	The dog's doodahs.
Toaster	http://www.toaster.co.uk/	Burn your 'TV Quick' and use this instead.
Cult Film Site	http://sepnet.com/recaramer/index	
Celebrities Screwed	http://www.celebscrew.hypermart.net/	Sleazy gossip.
Wired	http://www.musicnewswire.com/	The best start for music news.
MysteryNet	http://www.MysteryNet.com/	Everything for budding Poirot's.
Salon	http://www.salonmagazine.com/	Fantastic and varied online magazine.

SEAL Membership Benefits

SEAL members benefit from many services:

Help and Advice

SEAL members are always giving each other help and advice on all aspects of Amiga hardware and software, when you join you'll get a listing of all the members with their phone numbers so there's always someone to turn to in your hour of need.

Hardware Fitting and Software Installation

Within SEAL there are many years of Amiga experience, including the fitting and configuration of countless pieces of hardware and the installation and use of numerous software packages. So if you need a helping hand there's almost bound to be someone with experience willing to help. In particular we've become expert at installing hard drives, CD-ROMs and other common upgrades.

Scanning and Printing

Several SEAL members have scanners and many have colour printers, if at any time you need some pictures scanned or documents printed someone is always available to help.

CD-R Hard Drive Backup

3 SEAL members have clubbed (groan!) together to buy a CD writer and they offer a hard disk backup service to other members at a £5 fee plus the cost of the CD-R (about £1). Simply contact Mick, Robert or Gary to arrange a backup session.

Discounts

As mentioned in the SEAL Update section we now have arrangements with Underground PD and Forematt Home Computing to give SEAL members a discount on their products. Underground PD will give you a 10% discount on anything you order and Forematt will give a variable discount depending on your order. We hope to announce more discount deals soon.

Note that with all these services you will have to pay for any costs incurred (for example paper for printing, disks etc.).

Joining

If you would like to join SEAL the membership fee is £30 per year (payable as £2.50/month if you prefer), this covers bi-weekly meetings including refreshments and 4 copies of Clubbed per year. For further details please contact us at:

Telephone	Mick Sutton on (01268) 761429 (7 to 9pm)
Write To	Mick Sutton 20 Roding Way Wickford Essex SS12 9BB http://seal.amiga.tm seal@thunder.u-net.com
Visit EMail	



touch of function key.

The FKey program in the Commodities (in sys:tools) drawer allows you to start programs and scripts at the

Download Service

If you're not on the Internet Clubbed can help you get the freely distributable programs and upgrades mentioned in this issue.

Simply send us one floppy disk per item along with a stamped addressed padded envelope. On each disk write the name of the software along with your name and address. Send the package to the following address:

Clubbed,
26 Wincoat,
Benfleet,
Essex, SS7 5AH,
ENGLAND.

We will then copy the files onto your disks and post them back to you. SEAL members can get a copy of any program or upgrade at a SEAL meeting, please phone Robert Williams in advance and let him know what you want before the meeting.

NOTE: this service applies to freely distributable software only, **NO PIRACY!**

Help Line

Several SEAL members have very kindly volunteered to help other members and readers of Clubbed in their areas of expertise.

General Amiga, Shell, AREXX, Directory Opus 5, DTP (PageStream)
Robert Williams
(01268) 569937 after 6pm
robert@williams.demon.co.uk

3D Graphics (Lightwave, Imagine), Image Processing (Photogenics, Art Effect)
Spencer Jarvis
(01375) 644614

General Amiga, SEAL Information
Mick Sutton
(01268) 761429
sicky@btinternet.com

Contact us if you'd be willing to use your skills to help other Amiga users and we'll add you to this list.

Next Issue

Here are some of the things we're planning for Issue 4, as you can see many of these rely on releases that are promised in the next month or so, if these don't happen then we won't include them!

Features

- Reaction to any WoA Announcements
- First look at AmigaOS 3.5

Reviews

- Photogenics 4.1
- ImageFX 4
- STFAX
- Pace Solo 56k
- Modem Olympus C1000L Digital camera and CamControl

Support

- Back to Basics: DosDrivers
- Installing a CD-ROM

Plus much more including all the usual news, interviews and support.

Our target date for this issue is mid October 1999, look at the web site for our current status.

<http://seal.amiga.tm>

James has let us use his brilliant Redskins image on our cover this issue, above is another example of his work, below are his comments on the images:

In *Red Skies*, Summer 1998, I was trying to comment on the uncertain rebirth, either a red sky at dawn or dusk. OS 4 & 5 had just been proposed, & I expressed my own expectations of what type of the future there might be for the new Amiga.

Eventually I might create an animated-multimedia version of Red Skies in Cinema 4d using animated textures & material opacities, although this would take a long time to produce & might approach another subject.

I am currently producing a completely new scene, but using Cinema 4d as the base tool. I'll upgrade Photogenics soon to allow for multiple layers, which should make spontaneous creation & composition easier.

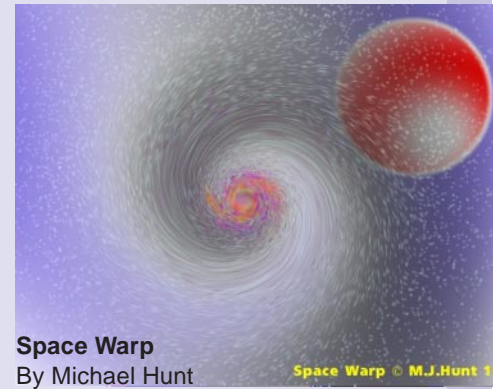
My profession is that of a Graphic Designer, working on a wide variety of work on various systems, although, it's on my Amiga that I get to produce pieces purely for fun. I'm never completely satisfied with what I produce, if I ever do I'll know that it is time to retire.

Jim - 01509-211052 - jim@red.prestel.co.uk

Candy Factory Pro



Gallery

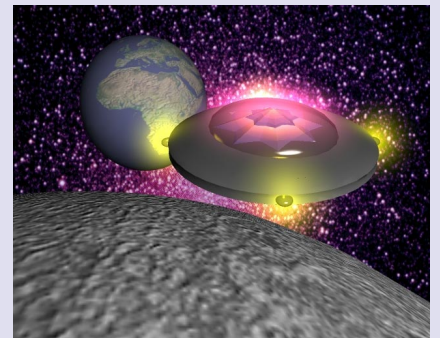


Space Warp

By Michael Hunt

Mike used Newtek's recently freely released TV Paint to create this image. This really shows off TVPaint's subtle gradient handling and the tornado special effect. The background and foreground were composited using the layers facility.

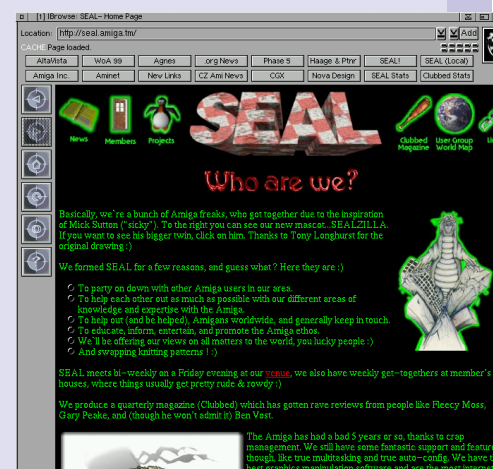
You can download TVPaint (which requires a graphics card) from <http://www.newtek.com>.



Hubcap

By Tony Kinnear

Tony Rendered this fun image in Cinema 4D



SEAL Web site

<http://seal.amiga.tm>